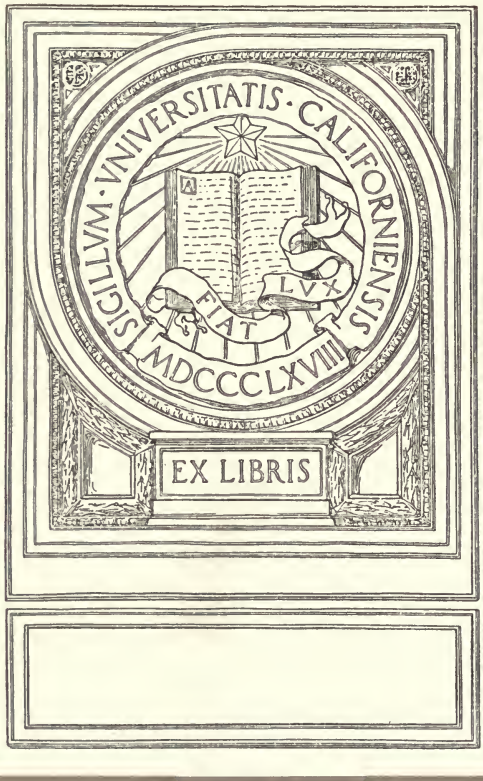
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Porter

MEMOIR

OF

COMMODORE DAVID PORTER;

OF THE

UNITED STATES NAVY.

BY

ADMIRAL DAVID D. PORTER.

WITH

PORTRAIT AND HELIOTYPES.

U. S. S. PALOS

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ERRATA.

Page 22, 2d line, for "Frenchman," *read* Frenchman's.
34, 30th line, for "never afterwards impaired," *read* never impaired.
35, 5th line, for "French schooner," *read* latter.
35, 2d line from bottom, for "Experiment," *read* former.
35, last paragraph, for "Enterprise," *read* Experiment.
39, 7th line, for "Porter," *read* him.
47, 22d line, for "his enemy," *read* the Corsair.
56, 5th line, for "strict," *read* implicit.
68, 7th line from bottom, for "gunboat," *read* gunboats.
80, 10th line from bottom, for "Porter," *read* him.
107, 16th line from bottom, for "owner," *read* owners.
112, 18th line, for "convey," *read* convoy.
113, 4th line, for "ship," *read* ships.
120, 21st line, for "which was," *read* then.
144, 10th line from bottom, for "get windward," *read* get to windward.
155, 27th line, for the "Essex," *read* she.
163, 10th line from bottom, "for Essex," *read* frigate.
164, 14th line, for "the men," *read* them.
173, 10th line from the bottom, for "these men," *read* them.
180, 14th line, for "all over," *read* on.
197, 15th line, for "landing," *read* beach.
205, 7th line from bottom, *omit* "besides."
206, 3d line, for "the determination of the Typees," *read* their determination.
207, 12th line from bottom, for "here and there," *read* in all directions.
226, 23d line from the bottom, for "these songs," *read* the songs.
233, 2d line from bottom, for "enemy," *read*," enemy's ships.
237, for page "337," *read* 237.
239, for "twelve long guns," *read* six long guns.
245, 8th line from bottom *read* the commander of a ship of war.
249, 4th line from bottom *read* demanded to know.
295, for "McIntoch," *read* McIntosh.
368, for "Guatzacolcos," *read* Guasacualcos.
376, for "csmall," *read* small.
411, 1st line, for "Florida," *read* Floria.

MEMOIR

OF

COMMODORE DAVID PORTER.

INTRODUCTION.

THE history of a nation is the history of its distinguished men; and we neglect a duty, if we fail to do justice to the memory of those, who, either in peace or war, have done honor to the country.

The events of the last war, with England, once held a prominent place in the public mind; and it is one of the objects of this book to reäwaken those recollections, for the nation seems to have forgotten the events of 1812, and the men who snatched her laurels from the mistress of the seas, and forced an honorable peace.

The United States Navy had on its rolls, during that war, many gallant spirits who would have rivaled the fame of Blake and Nelson, had the opportunity been offered them. Their country should never allow their names to sink into oblivion.

Although our navy has always borne a very prominent and successful part in all the wars in which the United States has been engaged, yet it has never

received full justice from the community. It is true, that while the memory of some of its triumphs was fresh in the popular mind, the service has been the recipient of *short lived* applause, but such momentary enthusiasm soon died out in default of further excitement to keep it alive.

The proof of this is, that in time of peace the navy is allowed to languish, and maintain only a precarious existence; and not a single monument has ever been erected by the government to commemorate its heroes or their victories.

Even that illustrious sailor Paul Jones, who first taught the English to respect our flag, is generally referred to as a bold adventurer, a designation given him by our foes, and which we, to our shame, have accepted.

The names of Truxton, Hull, Bainbridge, Perry, McDonough, Decatur, Preble, Lawrence, Somers, Biddle, and others, are occasionally remembered as men who at a remote period performed some gallant service; but nothing has been done to preserve the memory of those distinguished officers; and it is only within a few years, that anything like an accurate record of their achievements was given to the world. This is inexcusable, for few indeed have any conception of the hardships and sacrifices of those who went forth to battle with the "Mistress of the seas," upon her chosen element.

We should never forget, that in 1812, we entered into what was considered a hopeless conflict with the greatest navy the world had ever seen, and that but for the gallantry of our seamen we should have been forced to agree to an ignominious peace.

The successes of our navy, to quote the language of Byron,

> "—— taught her Esau brethren that the flag,
> The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,
> May bow to those whose red right hands have bought
> Rights cheaply earned with blood."

Through the efforts of the navy we gained what we went into the war to obtain, and from that time to this, our flag has been respected, as that of one of the great powers of the world.

The history of that memorable struggle has been ably written by our distinguished countryman, Cooper: and from his naval experience and personal knowledge of the principal actors, he was well qualified for the task; but in a general description of the war it was of course impossible to give that full account of the public and private life of his heroes, by which alone their merits can properly be estimated.

Since the war with England, many events have occurred, in which our naval officers figured conspicuously, the details of which are unknown to the public. Most of those who were distinguished in the war of 1812, have since occupied important positions at home and abroad, and have left the impress of their characters indelibly fixed upon the naval service; and the survivors of those who served under their command still delight in the remembrance of their career under these distinguished pioneers of our navy.

Conspicuous among the gallant spirits to whom I have referred, was the subject of this memoir. His career, in and out of the United States navy, was

marked with more than ordinary distinction, and his history is unusually interesting from the halo of romance which has been thrown around his exploits.

The object of the author is to give a simple narrative of Commodore Porter's life, which he feels sure will interest all who take a pride in the history of our navy.

Most of the biographies of our naval men, have been prepared from imperfect materials, often the only ones accessible, and although the author of this memoir is fully conscious of his inability to do justice to the subject, in a literary point of view, he hopes that errors of authorship will not be too severely criticized.

In his desire to do justice to the memory of a gallant officer, the author may perhaps incur the charge of partiality, but he has endeavored to give Commodore Porter simply the credit which he received from his cotemporaries.

The fame he acquired in the service of his country is his only monument; but that will we trust endure longer than bronze or marble.

Most of the friends and cotemporaries of Commodore Porter have passed away, but their descendants will, I think, find the story of his life worthy their perusal.

The young officers of the navy will be benefited by a familiarity with the history of one whose example will stimulate them. They will see how determination will overcome all obstacles, how ships in time of war can be maintained by living upon the enemy, and how much an officer can accomplish who depends

upon his own resources, and does not wait for specific orders before he dares to make a movement.

Throughout this narrative, it will be seen that Commodore Porter never hesitated to vindicate the honor of the flag, no matter what might be the consequences to himself personally, and it was owing to his undeviating loyalty to the stars and stripes that he was eventually driven from a service of which he was so distinguished a member, and obliged to spend the remnant of his life far from his friends and country—yet he never regretted the action which led to his resignation from the service. He felt that he could no longer associate with the officers as brothers, who had recommended his suspension for the term of six months, "for upholding the honor of the flag!"

Yes, incredible as it may seem, such was the substance of the sentence; and although no disgrace was implied, yet the Commodore's proud spirit would not brook even the intimation of a censure for doing what he considered an imperative duty.

The author has been, for several years, employed in collecting the material for this memoir, in the hope that some one more accustomed to literary labor might be induced to undertake the task. The work is necessarily incomplete, for many of the Commodore's papers have been lost or destroyed, yet sufficient remains for the reader to form a pretty accurate idea of his character, and to add something to the already published history of our country.

The author has been led out of his way, frequently, during the course of these memoirs, in discussing mat-

ters (relating to the navy generally) which may be deemed irrelevant in a work of this kind; but those discussions are introduced to show the difficulties under which naval officers have labored since the earliest foundation of the navy; and the credit due them for their successes, under such adverse circumstances. The author has no intention or desire to reflect on any one, but merely to point out the defects of a system, which must be apparent to those who have taken any interest in the matter—it is such a discussion as any officer can with propriety enter into, unless it is intended that the men who frequently are placed in positions where the honor of the nation is in their keeping, and who are the country's sole dependence in case of a foreign war, shall be considered a set of subservients, unworthy to have the same privilege that belongs to every American citizen.

Memoir of Com. David Porter.

CHAPTER I.

In treating of the early history of our navy and of those who held positions therein, it is often difficult to obtain full facts or the dates of occurrences. In the days of the revolution records were imperfectly kept, and when made have often been scattered and lost. There was no regular navy department, such functions having been performed by boards and congressional committees, and by the general commanding the army, who in certain cases seems to have been authorized to issue commissions, and by the state governments, some of which fitted out armed vessels on their own authority to cruise against the enemy.

But in whatever way the vessels and their officers were commissioned, all were considered as the continental navy, and many gallant affairs took place under these promiscuous authorizations, which are not noticed in the histories of the present day.

On the breaking out of the revolutionary war we find two brothers, David and Samuel Porter, commanding vessels commissioned to capture and destroy ships carrying stores to the British army. This was a perilous service from the great number of British cruisers hovering on the coast, and the patriots had often to fight their way through desperate odds to make their escape from a watchful and powerful foe.

The father of these two brothers was Alexander Porter, a native of Massachusetts, where he was born in the year 1727, and both had commanded merchant vessels previous to the war. It is very probable that the brothers were commissioned by Washington, to whom they appear to

have been well known. It is related that when David Porter's little daughter was presented to Washington, on his election to the presidency, with the remark: "This is the daughter of Captain Porter of revolutionary fame," the president laid his hand on her head with the remark, "May God bless his child."

In 1778, we find David Porter in command of the privateer sloop Delight, of six guns, fitted out in Maryland, and pursuing an active career against the enemy; and two years after he was in command of the ship Aurora, of ten guns, belonging to the state of Massachusetts, in which he is represented as having performed valuable service to the united colonies, though the particulars of his service have unfortunately been lost.

While cruising against the British, Samuel Porter was badly wounded and captured, and was confined in the Jersey prison ship, where he underwent the greatest hardships. While lingering in this horrible place he was unexpectedly joined by his brother David, who had also been captured by a superior force. We can imagine the joy of the dying man at meeting with his only brother, and the grief of the latter on seeing the lamentable condition to which his relative was reduced. David was allowed to attend his brother, and to close his eyes in death, which finally terminated his sufferings. He was so overcome at the melancholy termination of his brother's career, as to excite the sympathy of the officers and men, whose duty it was to perform the last offices for the dead, and they exerted themselves to procure for him indulgences not usually granted to a prisoner.

Porter was of a jovial disposition, and full of anecdotes, and after the duties of the day were over, would entertain both officers and men of the prison ship with his stories of the sea. In fact his conduct was so satisfactory, and he made himself so useful and entertaining to the British, that he was not locked up at sunset with the other prisoners. After some months imprisonment, Captain Porter, by ingratiating himself with some of the crew, persuaded them to assist him to escape; so one night, when all was quiet, some of the members of a watering party, that was going on shore at daylight, headed our hero up in a water cask,

leaving the bung out so that he could breathe. He laid all night in this uncomfortable place, and when day broke, was rolled along the deck and into the launch. There was great danger of discovery, but the jolly tars managed by some means to get the officer of the launch out of the way, and released Porter, who divided with his benefactors what little money he had, and went on his way rejoicing. He at once reported his escape at headquarters, and continued to serve his country until peace was declared; making many valuable captures, and profiting no doubt by his experience as a captive to restrain his too ardent temperament.

Captain Porter resided in Boston until some years after the revolution, when he was appointed a sailing master in the navy, by General Washington, and was given charge of the signal station on Federal hill, Baltimore, a place for which his nautical experience well qualified him; and where for several years he enjoyed the society of his young family. He had four daughters and two sons: David, and John, the former of whom is the subject of this memoir. The other son, John Porter, entered the navy in 1806, and died in Watertown, Mass., in 1831; having attained the rank of commander.

David Porter, whose history will be narrated in the following pages, was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on the first day of February 1780, in Charter street, in that old part of the town known as the North End—a quarter which has been the birth place of many distinguished characters. The house in which Porter was born remained in existence till about the year 1847, when the writer got a glimpse of it just as the workmen were about to tear it down, in order to erect a more pretentious structure. The house was plain and suited to the simple wants of people of the past century, who managed to do without the "modern improvements" which are now so essential to our existence.

Young David was brought up almost entirely by his mother, his father being absent much of the time at sea. Mrs. Porter is described as beloved by all who knew her, and it was to the faithful training of this excellent woman that her son acquired that strict integrity which distin-

guished him through life. The boy, at an early age, manifested the restless energy which ever afterwards characterized him, in that respect resembling his father, whose daring spirit would stop at nothing when there was any enterprise on foot.

To his good mother, David was indebted for his early education, and it was her earnest desire that his progress through life should be guided by the principles of religion, so that his character would receive no stain; and his most earnest subject of regret, in after life, was the neglect he had paid to many of his mother's admonitions, and the grief he had caused her by his hasty temper and madcap pranks; for being a boy of ungovernable spirits he was always getting into scrapes which frequently caused him much inconvenience. His constitution was naturally delicate and his frame fragile, and much anxiety was felt by his parents lest he should never attain manhood; but such was the strength of his spirit that he passed through fits of sickness that would have carried off many a stronger boy.

As David grew in years he developed a fondness for a sea life, from hearing his father's account of his various adventures, and when he was about sixteen years old his father, having obtained command of a vessel in the West India trade, took the lad to sea with him (much against his fond mother's wishes), by way of initiating him into the life of a sailor. It was in the year 1796, that the Eliza, commanded by David Porter Sen^{r}, sailed from Baltimore bound to the West Indies at a time when the United States was without a navy, and when an English press-gang did not hesitate to board any of our vessels, and carry off such of their crews as might suit their fancy!

While the Eliza was lying in the port of Jeremie in the Island of San Domingo, an armed boat from a British man-of-war came alongside and demanded to search the vessel for deserters or for men who owed allegiance to Great Britain. Captain Porter told the British officer that if he came on board the Eliza it would be at his peril, as he was armed and would resist him to the last extremity. The Englishman laughed at the idea of a Yankee skipper bidding defiance to his majesty's forces, and ordered his men to go on board at once. It is not

known who fired the first shot, but the order to board had no sooner passed the British officer's lips than Captain Porter called out, "Repel boarders!" and the Americans, armed to the teeth, rushed upon their assailants and drove them overboard. Several men were killed and wounded on both sides, and one man was shot down by the side of young Porter, who was lending his feeble aid to help drive the press-gang from the ship. The honor of the flag was never more fully vindicated than on this occasion, Captain Porter setting an example which it would have been well if it had been universally followed. In the affair of the Eliza young Porter received his first baptism in blood, and the circumstances of that event made a lasting impression upon him.

The traditions of his family and the sufferings which his relatives had endured in the British prison ship, were not calculated to prejudice him in favor of the English; but this attempt of a powerful ship of war to impress the crew of his father's vessel, filled him with contempt and hatred for a government that could sanction such cowardly actions. This feeling of hostility to the English grew with his years, and in his after life was well understood by them; and, to use his own expression, his intercourse with them to the last was marked by treachery and duplicity on their part, yet he considered it the highest compliment ever paid him, when the British branded him as a pirate, and sent so many ships to try and stop his career. Perhaps that famous motto that he carried at the mast head of the Essex, "Free Trade and Sailor's Rights," was inspired by the remembrance of the bloody scene on the Eliza's deck, and very likely his desire to enter the navy was that he might help to avenge the continual insults that were offered the American flag.

The affair of the Eliza excited much attention at the time, and Captain Porter received great commendation from all quarters when the narrative was published in the newspapers of the day. The government of the United States was so far stirred by public opinion, as to make a mild protest against the impressment system as applied to our vessels; but how little effect this manifesto had upon "the mariners of England," may be judged from the action

of a British squadron in boarding an American ship of war, on the 16th of November, 1798, and taking out part of her crew; the captain of the United States vessel not striking a single blow in defense of his country's honor.

As some palliation for this officer's inaction it may be said, that he had received orders from the government on no account to interfere and prevent the capture of our vessels, as the British "would no doubt compensate for such captures illegally made;" as if national honor was a matter of dollars and cents. The gallantry of old Captain Porter stands out, therefore, in bold relief, a striking contrast to the timid policy of the United States government at that time.

After the return of the Eliza from her voyage, young David Porter sojourned a few weeks with his friends, and then sailed, as first officer, in a vessel bound from Baltimore to St. Domingo. He was now a sallow-faced lad of seventeen, with a bright black eye indicating the soul that dwelt within that frail tenement. Until the day of his death the remarkable brightness of those eyes was never dimmed, but would flash up in any moment of excitement, showing that time could not quench the fire that animated his spirit.

On his second voyage he was to further taste the vicissitudes of life. The brig in which he sailed was at one of the ports in San Domingo when a boat's crew came on board from an English frigate on the usual errand of impressment; and the master, either taken by surprise, or being of different spirit from old Captain Porter, allowed his crew to be taken on board the frigate, where they were kept until they should be in the humor to enlist. Most of the Americans refusing to perform duty were put in irons, among them Porter, whose example doubtless stimulated his shipmates to resistance. In consequence of their continued refusal to do duty, and as the captain expressed it "the bad example set the crew of his majesty's ship," the Americans were ordered to the gangway.

When brought to the mast, and seeing the ignominious punishment about to be inflicted, young Porter broke away from the master-at-arms, ran below and stowed himself away in some dark corner of the hold, where he

could not be found, the crew of the frigate sympathizing with him and covering his escape. The captain gave orders to let him alone, saying, "he'll come out fast enough when he gets hungry." That night the young man did come out, and crawling cautiously along the main and mizzen chains dropped quietly overboard and swam unobserved to a Danish brig at anchor near by, where he lay concealed in the hold until the brig sailed for Europe, when he came on deck and worked his passage across the Atlantic. At the end of the voyage he found himself in Europe without money and with only the clothes on his back; but nothing daunted, he soon shipped in a foreign vessel bound to the United States. It was mid winter when the vessel sailed to cross the Atlantic, and great must have been the sufferings of this frail youth, destitute of necessary clothing and exposed to all the hardships of a common sailor; but he bore up manfully, and was ever at his post when the frequent storms required all hands to be at their stations. It seems almost incredible that his delicate constitution could have stood the hardships to which he was exposed, but it only affords another instance of a feeble body supported by a strong mind.

Young Porter made a third voyage to the West Indies, and had the misfortune again to be impressed on board a British vessel of war. While on board this ship he received very brutal treatment for what was termed his insubordination, but it was not long before he managed to escape and rejoin his friends. Being now naturally somewhat disgusted with life in the merchant service, seeing little chance of avoiding a press-gang if he went to sea in a private vessel, he obtained through the influence of his friends a midshipman's appointment in the navy. His warrant was dated April 16th, 1798, at which time he was eighteen years of age; but having passed through two years of great hardship, he had gained a valuable experience, and his bodily frame had become much stronger. From his father he had acquired a fair knowledge of navigation, and he was already an excellent seaman.

Having now launched young Porter into the profession of his choice, we shall endeavor to give an impartial account of his naval career; and here we must digress a

little, to show the causes which led us into a conflict with France, our ally in the revolution; for in this conflict David Porter gained his first reputation in arms.

CHAPTER II.

IN 1795, a disgraceful treaty of peace was signed with Algiers, which cost the government of the United States nearly a million of dollars, a sum quite sufficient to have kept the port of Algiers hermetically sealed until the Algerines should have sued for peace, and permission to send their vessels to sea. The result of our difficulty with this piratical nation was the formation of a small navy, consisting of the Constitution, 44; President, 44; United States, 44; Chesapeake, 38; Constellation, 38; Congress, 38; which it will be seen, were to be brought in play on a theatre little dreamed of when it was proposed to build them.

During the war in Europe, in which the maritime powers were generally engaged at this time, their hostility to each other led them to trespass on the privileges of neutrals, in which American commerce suffered very severely; and the gradual encroachments on the rights of the American people finally led to a quasi war with France. The French having given great assistance to the Americans during their revolution, presumed upon this circumstance, and the cruisers of France carried their depredations to a height of audacity. They likely mistook the amount of influence of their own country over the great body of the American people, and also considering that the Americans were not much of a naval power, and would not attempt to resist their action (even though it was so detrimental to our mercantile interests). They commenced their acts of hostility by capturing British

vessels within the waters of the United States. Not content with doing this against our earnest protestations, they committed the same offense against American merchant vessels. All our attempts to obtain redress from the French government failed, and our government determined no longer to submit to this injustice, recommended, in April 1798, to congress, to fit out vessels of war for the defense of our rights, hoping this would have the effect of checking these aggressions and avert hostilities. The American nation felt very grateful to France for the assistance rendered them during the revolution, but their gratitude did not extend so far as to permit those gross violations of neutrality and oppression of a people for whom the French professed so much love and esteem. Twenty small vessels were recommended to be built and six ships of the line, which were in addition to the six frigates already authorized by law. The frigate United States, 44 guns, and the Constellation, 38, had been launched the year previous, and were being fitted for sea. A secretary of the navy was appointed at this period, the first time this department had been established by a law of congress. Benjamin Stoddart of Georgetown was the person selected to fill the place. On the 4th of May, of the same year, the president was empowered, by congress, to retaliate upon the French, and to "instruct all the commanders of public vessels to capture and send into port all French cruisers, whether public or private, that might be found anywhere on our coast having committed, or which there were reasons to suppose might commit, depredations on our commerce; they were also directed to recapture every American vessel that might have fallen into their hands." Laws were also passed providing for the condemnation of such captured vessels as prizes of war, and for the distribution of the same amongst the officers and crew.

At this time, the navy consisted of the six frigates building, twelve vessels to be built, carrying between eighteen and twenty guns; and congress authorized the acceptance of twelve more, should they be offered to the president by private citizens.

This was a small navy with which to commence war against a powerful naval power, but the government did

not hesitate a moment in vindicating its rights, averse as it had shown itself to break the ties of friendship with a nation that had extended to us a helping hand. But our much abused amity could no longer stand the aggressions of these doubtful friends. Congress, by law, solemnly abrogated the old treaty of alliance, which apparently bound France and America together, on the plea that these treaty obligations had been repeatedly violated by France; and that the French continued, notwithstanding the protestations of the United States, to uphold a system of predatory warfare on the commerce of the republic.

Although an express declaration of war was not made by congress, yet by the president's instructions, war actually commenced the moment our ships of war put to sea; and commanding officers were authorized to capture all public and private armed vessels, and authority was also given to issue to private armed cruisers letters of marque, authorizing them to capture French property, upon the high seas, wherever it might be found.

The above facts are mentioned to show, to those unfamiliar with the subject, how it happened that the United States became engaged in war with its ancient ally so soon after the revolution. Were not the facts explained, it might subject us to censure on the ground of ingratitude to a nation to whom we owed so much, and without whose assistance we would not so easily have gained that independence which has allowed us to become a great nation and an asylum for all the oppressed people of the earth.

Our navy at that time was a badly organized affair. Its officers had received no regular training at naval schools, or on the decks of well conducted ships of war. The commanders were from the merchant service, as also the subordinate officers, and the seamen were taken from among the hardy fishermen brought up, amid the storms of winter, on our eastern coast. It was at this period that the marine corps was permanently established, adding a new feature to our naval marine, for though we had possessed marines in the war of the revolution, yet they had been abolished with the navy which then existed.

This may be said to be the first actual establishment of an American naval marine, the nucleus from which the

present establishment has sprung. A great many young men of the best families and political influence pressed forward to join the naval service, that being at the moment the favorite branch, and many intelligent boys whose age did not preclude their entrance into the navy, were enrolled as midshipmen.

Commander, officers and seamen joined heartily in the feeling of the day, and in the desire to wipe out the insult to which the Americans had too long submitted. Barring the want of that strict naval discipline, so necessary to a vessel of war, few ships were better manned than ours were at that time; but the officers were apt scholars and soon adopted the rules and regulations of the British navy, which then existed and in many respects still exist in our service to this day.

The activity and determination of our government, as well as the energy of the navy officers, in fitting out the ships and forming a good organization, astonished every one; especially those who looked upon the American people as a set of traders, who would be willing to submit to every insult rather than submit to loss; which character the Americans had gained by their patient submission to the exactions of the Algerine cruisers, which levied tribute on them for their piratical government.

Great emulation existed which ship should get to sea first, to carry out the ideas of our government. The frigate Constellation, 38, was the second ship that sailed; she was commanded by Thomas Truxton, a brave and experienced seaman who feared nothing that floated on the ocean. Previous to the sailing of the Constellation, David Porter was ordered to the ship, as his first introduction to the naval service. He was soon at home on the decks of a ship of war, seeming to imbibe, intuitively, the principles of his chosen profession. At quarters, he was stationed in the Constellation's foretop, a post at that time generally given to the midshipmen of the greatest experience, which we presume he was considering his age and opportunities at sea. Young Porter, in a short time, attracted the attention of the commander and officers of the ship, by his good conduct and attention to duty. His restless energy and

activity kept him nearly always on deck, or in the tops, learning the details of his profession; his waking hours below being devoted to skylarking and practical jokes on his brother midshipmen, for he was a lively boy and a general favorite on board the ship. Altogether his was a good character with which to commence a naval career.

In those days the authority of a ship's captain was absolute, and it was not unusual for a commander and his watch officers to commit acts of oppression that would not be tolerated at the present time. Even as late as the year 1820 midshipmen in the British navy were flogged like messenger boys; and our commanders, in 1798, following British customs, introduced punishment equally unpleasant on board their vessels. It was customary in those days to swear at the midshipmen, send them to the mast head and confine them for slight offenses on bread and water, which usages we are happy to say have long since been abandoned.

It was then a difficult matter for a young officer to get along on board ship, and maintain the good will of all his superiors. Among the best set of officers there are generally one or two ill tempered persons who would find fault with an angel, if the latter was so unfortunate as to be under their orders; and who having few good qualities of their own, are jealous of those they see in other people.

There was an officer of this description, whose name it is not necessary to mention, on board the Constellation. He was of intemperate habits and made himself particularly disagreeable to all on board, especially to young Porter, whom he seemed to take a special pleasure in insulting whenever the opportunity offered. The early training of the young man, under his father—who was a strict disciplinarian—prevented him from noticing these attacks until they became too grievous to bear. He could not appeal to the commander, or any superior officer, for in those days such a course was inadmissible, so he was obliged to bear it patiently though his blood boiled at the indignities heaped upon him.

His only satisfaction was to see Captain Truxton visiting upon the lieutenant's head some of the same kind of indignities the latter showered upon him; for the lieutenant

being a poor seaman, and a poor officer, and frequently intoxicated, merited the insulting rebukes he received from his commanding officer. Tyrant like, he bore them meekly, feeling that they were deserved, and knowing that he held his commission only at the will of his superior.

One night, during the first watch, this lieutenant sent Midshipman Porter below with some order which the latter hastened to obey, but on returning to the deck he was assailed with a shower of abuse for not more promptly carrying out the commands he had received. Porter made no reply until the lieutenant commenced swearing at him and calling him by the most abusive epithets. The midshipman's temper would not permit him to bear this in silence, and he answered back in what the officer of the deck considered a disrespectful manner. This to the latter was nothing less than mutiny, and raising his hand he struck Midshipman Porter in the face. Such a thing, in our day, seems hardly credible, for if an officer were to inflict such an indignity upon a common sailor he would be liable to trial by court martial; but in those times similar events were of common occurrence. The young midshipman's blood boiled at this outrage, the greatest he had ever experienced, and forgetting what was due to discipline he dealt the lieutenant a tremendous blow and felled him to the deck, where for an instant he lay stunned and motionless. Of course there was great excitement on the frigate's deck, and the midshipmen of the watch rushed to see what had occurred. The lieutenant sprang to his feet and called for the sergeant of the guard, and in the midst of the confusion Captain Truxton, who was always on the alert, stepped from his cabin to the deck. The lieutenant had seized a cutlass to inflict summary punishment on the offender, but the captain's presence put a stop to his proceedings.

When the captain heard of the complaint against Midshipman Porter he was very indignant at the breach of discipline, and the young man was sent below under arrest with the prospect of dismissal from the service; but when the captain came to learn all the facts of the case, his sense of justice compelled him to restore the midshipman to duty, and ever afterwards he noticed him favorably.

The lieutenant was finally dismissed the service for drunkenness; and years after when Porter was a lieutenant and leading an attack on some Tripolitan vessels, his old adversary pulled the stroke oar in the boat. The vessels were hauled up on the beach in the harbor of Tripoli, and Lieut. Porter had volunteered to burn them up. The quondam lieutenant proffered some advice on the occasion, but at the sound of his voice he was recognized by Porter, who rebuked him for his interference. If ever there was an instance of retributive justice it was exhibited in the case of this person; yet although the ex-lieutenant was a seaman on board Lieut. Porter's own ship, the latter never in any way referred to the past or let the man see that he even remembered his offense. In fact Lieut. Porter so far conquered his natural aversion to his former persecutor, as to have him appointed a petty officer on his transfer to another ship, justly thinking that his old enemy had been sufficiently punished by his degradation in rank.

The Constellation sailed on the 20th of August, 1798, and after cruising along our coast and in the West Indies convoying American merchantmen, she sailed for her prescribed cruising ground off the Island of Nevis in the West Indies. On the 9th of February, 1799, a large ship was descried to the southward, and the frigate being to windward, ran down to reconnoitre the stranger, who on her approach set American colors. Captain Truxton thereupon showed private signals, but the stranger could not respond, and deeming further disguise useless, hoisted the French flag and fired a gun to windward as a challenge, keeping meantime under easy sail, to invite the Constellation to a contest. This was the first opportunity, since the war commenced, that the Constellation had had to get alongside an enemy of a force likely to make a combat certain, and she was not slow to avail herself of the chance, the enemy meanwhile gallantly awaiting the onset.

"When the Constellation had got abeam of the French frigate, and so near as to have been several times hailed, she opened her fire, which was gallantly returned by the Frenchman. The Constellation gradually drew ahead, both ships keeping up a brisk cannonade. The former suffered most in her sails and rigging, and while under

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the heaviest fire of her antagonist the foretopmast was badly wounded near the lower cap. The foretop was under the command of Midshipman Porter, who on this occasion showed great promptitude and bravery. He hailed the deck several times informing those below of the accident that had occurred to the mast, and finding that his hails were disregarded — his voice not being heard amid the din of cannonading — he took upon himself the responsibility of going aloft in the heat of the conflict, cutting the stoppers and lowering the yard. Had he not done so the mast would have gone over the side in a very few moments, with the pressure of sail on it, and the issue of the battle might have been very different.

In the meantime the effect of the Constellation's fire was telling very severely upon the French frigate, and notwithstanding the partial loss of the foretopsail, the former was enabled to throw in several raking broadsides which soon decided the combat.

After maintaining a close cannonade for more than an hour, the Constellation shot out of the smoke, wore round, and hauling across her antagonist's stern, was ready again to rake her, when the Frenchman struck his colors.

The prize proved to be the frigate L'Insurgente, Captain Barreault. She was one of the fastest ships afloat, and had committed serious depredations upon our commerce, besides recapturing the Retaliation, a vessel we had originally taken from the French.

The French frigate was much cut up, and had sustained a loss of seventy men in killed and wounded. The Constellation was also much damaged aloft though suffering no material injury to the hull, and had only three men wounded. It was the old story of the Anglo-Saxon against the Celt at sea, and if the French ships that encountered the British handled their guns no better than did L'Insurgente, no wonder that an English vessel would sometimes capture a Frenchman twice her size. There was much courage displayed on this occasion by the French, but little professional skill.

The Insurgente's armament consisted of 40 French 12-pounders, and she carried four hundred and nine men; while the Constellation had 36 guns and three hundred

and nine men. The main deck battery of the Constellation of 26 24-pounders was much heavier than the Frenchman, but as the fire of the latter was so inaccurate that few of her shot struck the Constellation's hull, it mattered little whether she mounted 24 or 6-pounders.

This action showed an aptitude for naval service on the part of our seamen, and showed what might be expected in the future. When the news of the battle reached the United States our people were as much elated as a young boxer who had won his first victory against an old pugilist. In their ignorance of such matters they naturally imagined that our navy was a match for any other in the world; rather a hazardous conclusion to base on the results of a single action. However, it is certain that Captain Truxton, and those under him, did their work in a manner entitling them to the greatest praise, for though there was a disparity of force in favor of the American frigate, it was not sufficient to account for such a disparity in the list of killed, and the effect on the hull of the French vessel.

Mr. John Rodgers (afterwards Commodore Rodgers), one of the best seamen that ever trod a ship's deck, was at that time first lieutenant of the Constellation. When the Insurgente struck, Mr. Rodgers was directed to take possession of the prize, which he proceeded to do in a boat manned by eleven men and Midshipman Porter. While Lieut. Rodgers was busy transferring the prisoners to the Constellation, it came on to blow heavily which put a stop to further proceedings. Consequently 173 of the French crew were left on board the prize that night with only the two officers and eleven men to take care of them. The gale rapidly increased and in spite of every effort the two ships became separated in the darkness of the night. The situation of Lieut. Rodgers was now critical. The Insurgente was encumbered with the wreck of the fallen spars and rigging, the dead and wounded were scattered all about the ship, and the prisoners evinced a disposition to rise against their captors. The gratings had all been thrown overboard by the crew, and no handcuffs could be found. Fortunately Lieut. Rodgers was a man of herculean strength and of the most determined character, and

Midshipman Porter though slight in frame showed a resolute spirit which elicited the highest encomiums from his superior officer. Finding that the prisoners must remain on board that night they were sent to the lower hold, the firearms were all secured, and a sentry was placed at the hatch with orders to shoot the first man who attempted to come up.

In this unpleasant situation our people continued for three days and nights, during all of which time they were without sleep, having to manage the frigate in a gale of wind and be constantly on the alert to prevent being overpowered by their prisoners.

Never in the history of our navy has such another feat as this been performed. It was necessary for Lieut. Rodgers to be constantly on deck to manage the half wrecked frigate assisted by six or seven men, while Midshipman Porter, with the remainder, was occupied below in taking care of the prisoners. How well the duty was performed the result showed. One of the guns was cast loose, loaded with grape and canister, and pointed down the hatch, over which a bag filled with shot was suspended, ready to be cut away at a moment's notice, all the muskets and pistols were kept loaded and lay by the hatch, and two or three men with pikes and battle axes to be used in case of emergency stood at the opening. The result of these precautions was that the Frenchmen were afraid to make any attempt to recapture the vessel, and amused themselves below by committing all the destruction possible.

It was a happy day for the handful of Americans when the Insurgente was anchored safely in the harbor of St. Kitts, which they finally reached at the end of three days, and found the Constellation at anchor, all hands supposing that the Insurgente had been recaptured.

This was a rough school for young Porter, but he was fortunate in commencing his career with Captain Truxton and Lieut. Rodgers. Both were officers of the highest reputation, strict disciplinarians and men of undoubted probity. Under them Porter formed the character which did so much towards his advancement in the service; and he often, in after years, congratulated himself in having been brought up in such a thorough naval school.

Severe as was that discipline and unjust as were some of the decisions of naval commanders of those days against their junior officers, who were liable to dismissal from the service at the mere instance of a captious captain, yet it is acknowledged by those familiar with the subject that the usages of that early period were far better calculated to make officers who will distinguish themselves in war than those of the present day. Notwithstanding the attractions presented by a naval career, yet so great were the exactions and so unceasing the strain on a boy's nervous temperament that only the most rugged and determined could remain in the service for any length of time. On the whole it is unfortunate for the navy that this severe discipline was not maintained up to the present time, for if it had been with our advance in nautical science we should be invincible upon the ocean.

Captain Truxton was a very severe man, and his first lieutenant, Mr. Rodgers, was in no respect behind him. They had both been educated in the rough school of the merchant service, where the officers, having no marines to support them, had to depend upon their own physical powers for the maintenance of discipline among crews often made up of the most desperate men. Few of the present amenities of the quarter deck were practiced in the early days of the navy, and it required a great deal of forbearance in a high spirited youth to control his temper under the abuse to which he was often subjected.

Notwithstanding Midshipman Porter's ambition to make his way in the navy, he was several times on the point of resigning. Upon one occasion he told Captain Truxton that his tyranny was more than he could bear, whereupon the honest hearted old seaman took him by the hand and said: "My boy, you shall never leave the navy if I can help it; why you young dog, every time I swear at you, you go up a round in the ladder of promotion; and when Mr. Rodgers blows you up it is because he loves you and don't want you to become too conceited." Porter finally became much attached to Truxton and Rodgers, and their mutual friendship terminated only with their lives.

It was during the quasi French war, and under such officers as Truxton and Rodgers that our little navy laid that foundation which earned for it so much fame in a war with a greater power even than France, and raised up a body of officers who have never since been equalled, notwithstanding all the later advantages of education.

Our war with France was not such a trifling affair as many persons seem to suppose, for it was carried on earnestly for upwards of eighteen months, during which time, as is shown by public records, our navy not only captured and sent in 64 public and private armed cruisers, but recaptured a number of American vessels that had been made prizes to the French. The enemy's cruisers were well armed and manned, the object being to maintain a nursery for their seamen; while by sending out numerous letters of marque to prey upon our commerce she hoped to prevent the United States from becoming a formidable naval power, and in fact to reduce us to the lowest degree of humiliation. This was felt by naval men more than by our citizens generally, who, not being near the theatre of war, could hardly realize the indignities to which our country was subjected. It is no wonder that our officers strained every nerve to bring naval discipline up to that high water mark which it so long maintained.

When the aggressions of the Algerines, in 1798, had stimulated congress to authorize the construction of the six ships, formerly mentioned, mounting 246 guns, and orders were issued to officers of the navy to commence hostilities against the French, only the Ganges, Constellation, and Delaware were available to teach the second naval power of the world to respect American neutrality and American commerce. Under the circumstances, a declaration of hostilities against France was what an Englishman would call "plucky," and was worthy of the fathers of the Revolution, who were mindful of the glorious traditions of the past.

By the beginning of the year 1799, thirty-three vessels of war, mounting more than eight hundred guns, had been fitted for sea, and for more than a year this force was maintained afloat; a force actually superior to our navy of the present moment!

It was fortunate for the navy and for the country that we had at that time a statesman like John Adams in the presidential chair. He was well aware of the necessity of a navy to protect our coasts and commerce, and did all in his power to increase it to a size commensurate with the resources of the young republic. John Adams may therefore be styled the father of the navy, for without the impetus it received under his administration the service would probably never have amounted to much. It was certainly the policy of the succeeding administration to pull down all that Mr. Adams had built up, until necessity, in the shape of the Algerines, compelled it to provide for the defense of our commerce.

At that day we had no large navy yards as at present, but ships had to be built wherever it was found convenient, and fitted for service under their own officers. The promptness they displayed in getting their vessels to sea, shows the energy with which these officers were imbued and the earnestness of their desire to put a stop to humiliating aggressions against our flag.

The British were much surprised when they saw so many American ships of war spreading their sails in the West Indies; Commodore Truxton having, at one time, a squadron of ten ships under his command. The British received their American cousins kindly, and at first were rather amused at the strenuous efforts made by the Yankee cruisers to compete in routine and evolutions with their older rivals, but in a short time John Bull was forced to acknowledge that the young navy contained apt scholars, who would soon equal them in everything relating to ships of war.

The advent of Truxton's squadron, in the West Indies, was of great assistance to the English in extirpating the swarms of privateers that infested those waters under the French flag, preying indiscriminately upon English commerce and our own. The success of our countrymen forced the English to acknowledge that the former had performed a feat to which they were not equal, and it is fair to presume that the result was due to the greater energy of Truxton and his officers and men.

It was during this association with English vessels in the West Indies, that something like a uniform system of regulations was introduced on board our ships of war, and the "Laws for the better government of the navy," approved May 22, 1800, were taken nearly verbatim from the English regulations of that period, as was likewise the system of naval routine we adopted. It cannot be doubted that our officers benefited very much by this association, profiting by the experience of the older navy and avoiding many of their mistakes.

In writing the memoirs of a public character it is difficult to avoid trenching upon other matters that more properly belong to the general history of the period, but it would be impossible to give a proper idea of the merits and services of the subject of our biography without giving pretty full particulars of the historical events with which he was an active participator.

I have tried to give an idea of the school in which Decatur, Bainbridge, Rodgers, Morris, Hull, and many other distinguished officers, received the rudiments of a naval education. Under Truxton and Talbot in the West Indies was laid the foundation, elsewhere the capstone of a fame which the navy will never lose despite the changes in a republic.

Midshipman Porter was promoted lieutenant Oct. 8, 1799, and detached from the Constellation. Previous to his transfer from that ship, Mr. Porter was an unwilling actor in a melancholy affair, which being, however, an important event in his life, an account is herewith inserted.

While the Constellation was lying at Annapolis after her return from the West Indies, several seamen deserted from the ship and managed to reach Baltimore on some of the small coasters plying to that port. Commodore Truxton immediately dispatched Mr. Porter in the pilot boat to bring them on board, and he was particularly admonished not to let them escape, as it was desired to make examples of them, as they were bad characters. Mr. Porter, knowing that he must leave no stone unturned to capture the deserters, went through all the purlieus of Baltimore where such characters would likely take refuge. Now this duty was one very repugnant to an officer at

that time, for it was one that brought them in contact with the refuse of creation, to say nothing of the obvious danger of attempting an arrest under the circumstances. Mr. Porter wandered all over the town (no great journey in those days), and finally stopped at a common looking tavern where, being fatigued and hungry, he asked refreshment at the same time telling the landlord what business had brought him to Baltimore. Now this person was under the influence of liquor, and having for some reason a particular dislike to naval officers, he commenced a most abusive attack on Mr. Porter and ordered him out of the house; which order, to avoid a difficulty, Mr. Porter complied with. His movements, however, were not rapid enough to suit the fancy of the brutal landlord, who struck him a violent blow and knocked him down, following this up by stamping upon him.

Mr. Porter drew his side arms, at the same time, calling on the man to desist; but the latter renewing the assault, was killed on the spot. Of course this affair created intense excitement, and in a few moments all the people in the neighborhood flocked to the scene, and to avoid further ill treatment the young officer retreated in the confusion to the pilot boat, which immediately sailed for Annapolis, where the Constellation was awaiting its return, and a few hours later the frigate was at sea. At the coroner's inquest which was held over the remains of the unfortunate landlord, the wife, daughter and son of the latter acknowledged that the deceased had committed an unprovoked attack on Mr. Porter, and that the latter had killed him to save his own life. Probably the verdict of the jury was in accordance with the testimony, as Mr. Porter was never summoned to answer to any charge.

As soon as the war with France was ended Mr. Porter sought out the family of the man whom he had been obliged to kill. He provided for the daughters, obtained a situation for the son, and pensioned the wife as long as she lived. One of his latest acts was, to write and inquire after the family, and send them something out of the small salary he then received. At his death the family mourned him as their benefactor.

The unfortunate event which we have narrated was a

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source of great grief to this high minded man, even to his dying day; for although he knew himself to be blameless in the affair, yet he felt that it was a dreadful thing to take a man's life even in defense of his own.

Just after his promotion Mr. Porter was ordered as first lieutenant of the schooner Experiment, Lieut. Commandant Maley.

CHAPTER III.

OWING to the constant changes that occurred among officers at that time (for they were transferred from ship to ship as circumstances required), it is not possible for us to ascertain, precisely, what were Lieut. Porter's duties between the date of his detachment from the Constellation and his orders to the Experiment. This vessel joined the West India squadron in the latter part of 1799, and was ordered to convoy American merchant vessels, and to cruise against French privateers.

On the 1st of January, 1800, the Experiment, with several sail of merchantmen under convoy, lay becalmed in the bight of Leogane, in the Island of San Domingo. The vessels were much scattered, and quite at the mercy of any of the Picaroons who might be in the vicinity; for these gentry used to lay in wait in large barges, and overcoming the crew of a merchant vessel, would take her in tow, and by means of their powerful sweeps soon take her out of the reach of the protecting vessel, which for want of wind was unable to follow. While the Experiment and convoy were thus lying, not a breath of air stirring, and the vessels drifting about as the eddies influenced them, Captain Maley was informed that ten Picaroon barges, each containing forty men, and pulling 26 oars, with swivels mounted in the bows and on the quarters,

were rapidly approaching. The Experiment had been disguised to look as much like a merchant vessel as possible; so the unsuspecting Picaroons made towards her with the evident intention of boarding. The schooner's crew were sent to quarters, and everything was ready to give the freebooters a warm reception.

It is our imperative duty in treating of past events, to state the truth, no matter who may suffer from such a course. Lieutenant Porter took it for granted that the schooner was to be defended to the last extremity; but such we regret to say was not the view of his commanding officer. The latter considered the force about to attack his vessel too superior to contend with, and spoke of surrendering; but Lieut. Porter, backed by Lieut. Joshua Blake and other officers, protested so strongly against such a course, that the commanding officer yielded the command of the vessel to Porter, on whom rested all responsibility in case of failure. In the subsequent proceedings the commander never gave a single order, but stood in the lee gangway looking over the side. As soon as it was thought that the Experiment's fire would prove effective, the guns were run out and a shower of grape and canister was poured into the approaching boats, and the yells from the astonished freebooters showed that the battery had told with effect. The fire checked the advancing barges for a short time, when they again attempted to board, but were repelled with great slaughter. The enemy altered their tactics, several times trying to board the vessel over the stern, then over the bow; while some of the boats kept up a fire from their swivels; but their efforts availed them nothing, for so well was the Experiment defended that the Picaroons never even succeeded in getting alongside. The crew of the Experiment were kept close under the bulwarks, so as not to expose themselves to the Picaroon's fire; but Lieut. Porter, who had necessarily to present a good mark for the enemy's fire, while attending to the various duties of the vessel, was struck in the shoulder by a musket ball, inflicting a painful wound, notwithstanding which he never left his post.

For seven hours this unequal contest continued, and there is no telling what would have been the result, had it

remained calm much longer. The Picaroons, every now and then, repaired to the shore to leave their killed and wounded, and obtain reinforcements, but at length, finding the Experiment so fiercely defended, they gave up the attack, having lost two of their barges, sunk by the schooner's fire, and many of their men killed and wounded. On board the Experiment, there were but two men wounded, one of them Lieut. Porter. Circumstances, which have come to my knowledge, satisfy me that the entire management of this gallant affair devolved on Lieut. Porter, who never, for a moment, thought of surrrendering; and the officers and crew, animated by his example, displayed the greatest bravery against what would seem to have been overwhelming odds. At one time, matters looked very serious on board the Experiment, not so much from any damage received from the Picaroons, as from the fear of heavy reinforcements, who might be attracted by the firing; and could these freebooters have managed to surround the vessel with a large number of boats, it might have been impossible to prevent them from getting on board. Two of the convoy were seized and plundered by these people, and another vessel was boarded and her captain killed; but, being within reach of the Experiment's guns, the pirates were soon driven off; and a fresh breeze springing up, the Experiment and her convoy went on their way rejoicing.

This little affair was a good deal discussed, at the time, among the officers and crews of our West India squadron, and Lieut. Porter was unanimously applauded, for the determined stand he took against the weakness of his commanding officer. This case shows the necessity of firmness in time of danger; and of not yielding until forced by superior numbers to do so. Many a timid man has yielded to an imaginary superiority, when even a *show* of resolution would have given him the victory. No commander has any right to surrender his ship when his officers and crew demand the right to defend her; and no government will ever consider the protests of officers, under such circumstances, as insubordination. No one man has the right to disgrace a ship's company, by surrendering (without striking a blow) against the judgment

of all hands. Perhaps this doctrine may not be in accordance with strict naval discipline, but I will venture to say it will be approved by all brave men, in or out of the navy. Had Lieut. Porter been unsuccessful, he would not have been condemned. Brave men must take risks; and the timid rarely attain to high places.

In spite of his conduct, the captain of the Experiment received no official censure; but was allowed, by his officers, to retain the credit of having commanded his ship during this gallant affair, and it is in this light that he appears in the published history of the time.

One of the officers of the Experiment, Joshua Blake, writing to Commodore Porter nearly forty years after the affair, uses this language: "At that time, and ever since, I considered the safety of the vessel and the honor of the flag mainly to have depended on yourself, and that our situation would have been desperate indeed, had you been so disabled as to have been off duty."

Shortly after the affair of Leogane, Lieutenant Charles Stewart was ordered to command the Experiment. This was the same *Old Ironsides*, who afterwards commanded the Constitution; and the officers and crew of the Experiment were much pleased with the idea of having for their commander an officer, who already gave promise of the high reputation which he afterwards acquired. Lieut. Porter continued as first lieutenant of the Experiment under Stewart, which was a very gratifying arrangement to both of them; and here commenced a friendship, between these officers, which lasted while they lived; such a friendship as can only exist between brave men, uninfluenced by pitiful jealousies.

Though the Experiment had not been long in commission, her discipline and appearance was equal to that of any vessel in the fleet; and was such as to occasion Lieut. Commandant Stewart much gratification when he took command.

It is seldom that we find two such officers as Stewart and Porter occupying the positions of captain and first lieutenant on board the same vessel; and seldom, under such circumstances, does harmony prevail, for enthusiastic spirits are apt to differ, and cling with tenacity to their

own opinions. In this case, there was a mutual regard for the fine qualities possessed by each, which no time or circumstances could ever dim.

Not long after Stewart joined the Experiment, he had an opportunity to test his crew, and to judge how far they deserved credit for the high state of efficiency claimed for them, under the management of Lieut. Porter. It must be remembered, that the latter was yet barely twenty years old, and had been only three years in the naval service. In fact, he was about the age when the midshipmen of to-day graduate from the naval academy; and are then generally considered too young to be entrusted with much responsibility. Lieut. Porter had, however, been educated in a severe school of experience, which had given him such a knowledge of his profession as few men of his years have ever possessed. Such was the effect of the early training of that day, in developing qualities, that under present circumstances lie dormant until many years later, and we are convinced that the present system of "coddling" midshipmen instead of making them rely upon their own resources, is not as well calculated to bring out the highest qualities of an officer, as the method pursued in the early history of the navy. Under such instructors as Truxton, Talbot and Preble, the navy produced a rare set of officers; for in those days, midshipmen devoted their whole time to their profession, urged on by the strict discipline which reigned in the navy. The influence of the older officers prevailed over every thing with which they came in contact; and the result was, a corps of young men who had not their equals in any navy in the world.

Soon after assuming command of the Experiment, Lieut. Com. Stewart, cruising on his station, fell in with the privateer Deux Amis, mounting eight guns and carrying forty men. This vessel had created great havoc among our merchant vessels; and she was waiting in the track of commerce to pounce upon fresh prey, when the Experiment hove in sight. The Frenchman, evidently mistaking the schooner for a merchant vessel, waited for her to come quite near, and then made sail to attack; but the moment she came within range of the Experiment's guns, Lieut. Com. Stewart opened his battery so effect-

ively, that after a short resistance, the privateer surrendered; and everybody astonished that the encounter should terminate so quickly. Lieut. Porter, with a boat and four men, took possession of the prize, with orders to follow the Experiment, which made sail in chase of the Diana, another armed vessel that had hove in sight. Thus, for the second time, Lieut. Porter found himself on the deck of an enemy's vessel, with ten times the number of his own men around him; and having to depend entirely upon his own resources, and the courage of the few persons he had under his command. The moment the Experiment made sail away from the prize, the prisoners began to evince a spirit of insubordination; and were evidently getting ready to recapture their vessel; but the lieutenant immediately secured all the arms and ordered the crew forward, with the assurance that he would shoot any man who dared to cross a prescribed line. He then loaded one of the small guns with canister, pointed it forward, and stationed one of his men with a lighted match over it. For three nights and nearly four days, did the Americans remain in their embarrassing and dangerous position, having to guard ten times their own number and manage the vessel at the same time; but finally, Lieut. Porter succeeded in getting the prize into the same port of St. Kitts, where Lieut. Rodgers and himself had brought the frigate L'Insurgente under very similar circumstances.

The conduct of Mr. Porter, upon this occasion, increased the already high opinion of his commanding officer; and Stewart now gave him his entire confidence, which was never afterwards impaired during their future service together. The prize was sent to the United States, and yielded a good harvest of prize money to the officers and crew of the Experiment.

About a month after the foregoing occurrences, while the Experiment was cruising on her station, two sail having the appearance of French cruisers were made out. They proved to be a brig of 18 guns, and a three masted schooner of 14 guns; each vessel superior to the Experiment. Lieut. Com. Stewart having soon satisfied himself that his own vessel could outsail the enemy, manœuvred in a way to separate the two vessels, and to keep them at

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a distance until after dark. At length, perceiving that the Frenchman had apparently given up the chase, and that the brig was three or four miles ahead of the schooner, he cleared his ship for action; and putting the helm up ran down and closed with the French schooner, by running on her weather quarter and pouring in a broadside. The attack was so vigorous, and at such close quarters, that every shot told with dreadful effect, and in a few minutes the Frenchman surrendered. Throwing his first lieutenant (Mr. Porter) into the prize, Lieut. Com. Stewart made sail after the brig; but she had gained so much headway, while the fight with her consort was progressing, that Stewart soon lost sight of her altogether, and had to give up the chase. The Experiment then returned to her prize, which she carried safely into the port of St. Kitts, which would appear to have been the general rendezvous at that time. The captured vessel was the schooner of war Diane, of 14 guns and sixty men; she was bound to France, and in addition to her ship's company, had on board a French general and thirty invalid soldiers. Her commanding officer had been first lieutenant of the Insurgente, when captured by the Constellation, and he seemed fated to fall into the hands of the Americans.

A short time after this action, while the Enterprise was cruising on her station, a suspicious looking sail was descried beating up towards the schooner; but orders being given to chase, the stranger made off. She was followed until dusk when she disappeared and no hope of seeing her again was entertained, as it was supposed she would double on the Enterprise during the night and escape. Still the schooner kept on her course till midnight, when she tacked and shortly afterwards the strange sail was discovered at a little distance to windward. The Experiment went to quarters and running close under the stranger's lee, Lieut. Com. Stewart hailed him, and no reply being given, ordered a gun to be fired at the supposed enemy which was returned with a broadside. The Experiment now opened fire with all her guns, and began to close with the stranger, intending to carry the latter by boarding. It was blowing quite fresh at the time, and the Experiment being very light, owing to a short supply of provisions in the hold, laid

over so much on her side as to be unable to depress her guns sufficiently to strike the supposed enemy's hull; and all her shot was expended among the rigging. But this difficulty was soon remedied, and the resources of the trained seamen made manifest; planks were cut and placed under the trucks, which expedient made it possible to depress the Experiment's guns sufficiently, and the fire told with so much effect that in a few minutes the stranger struck her colors. Lieut. Porter was immediately sent to take possession, but on going alongside the strange vessel he was hailed and told to keep off, or he would be fired at. The boat was then moved out of the line of fire and the Experiment was about to recommence the action, when the stranger hailed again to say that he submitted. This vessel proved to be a privateer out of Bermuda with an armament of eight guns, and a crew of forty men: she was much cut up, and had four feet of water in her hold. As soon as Lieut. Com. Stewart learned of his unfortunate mistake, he rendered all the aid in his power to the privateer, and the Experiment laid by her all the next day to assist in repairing damages. The Experiment had one man killed and suffered a good deal of injury in her rigging.

This action showed the superiority of the Experiment's fire; and it will be observed that in all the fights in which this vessel was engaged the battle was finished in a short time. The vessels captured by the schooner were not, it is true, ships of war, except in the case of the Diane, which was a superior vessel to the Experiment in guns and men, if we include the thirty soldiers on board; and when we consider the rapid manner in which that contest was brought to a close, we cannot but admire the precision of the Experiment's fire. Up to this time, the Experiment had given an excellent account of herself, and the reputation of her commander and first lieutenant stood high; a compliment not to be despised when so many gallant fellows were vieing in a noble zeal for their country's service.

In the whole squadron only one vessel, the lucky Enterprise, Commander Shaw, took the lead of the Experiment in gallant actions, and her career was so wonderfully brilliant, that the recital seems at this day almost like a

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romance. In short the Enterprise was the most fortunate vessel ever known in the United States navy.

At the time of which we are writing, the only means of communication between the vessels of the squadron and the United States, were the prizes which conveyed the news of their own capture; and after the meagre particulars were slowly printed in the few newspapers which then existed along the seaboard; it was often weeks before the intelligence was transmitted by lumbering mail coaches or slow post riders to distant parts of the country. The old farmer receiving his weekly paper would read of the doings of our navy with astonishment; and no wonder that he considered it the greatest in the world and a match for Great Britain and France combined.

The United States government that had entered upon the war with France with many doubts and misgivings, was rejoiced at the reputation the navy was acquiring for the country, and the manner in which the wisdom of the declaration of hostilities had been vindicated. Mr. Jefferson and the republican or anti-federalist party had, from the beginning, opposed the war against our former allies; predicting the worst results, and reproaching the administration party with a fondness for extravagant naval and military establishments. However, after this war had closed, the officers and men who had served in the navy were the most popular people in the country; but the opposition no sooner came into power, than, unmindful of what the navy had done to show the world that the United States would not submit to insult or aggression, from any quarter, it began to pull the navy to pieces as fast as the other party had attempted to build it up. In fact the state of things was pretty much what exists to-day, only on a smaller scale. Congress, then, as now, seemed to be uncertain whether our experimental republic would succeed, and to this day, the legislative branch of the government has sometimes shown itself deficient in that wisdom which encourages liberal expenditures in order to maintain efficiency and true economy. Had the United States, in the first instance, after securing their independence, shown the world that they were determined to hold the position which nature evidently intended they should occupy, they would never

have been involved in that expensive struggle with France at the outset of their career. No doubt in the future history of our country, difficulties with foreign nations will be again precipitated upon us, by that false economy which has marked the nation's course in so many respects, particularly in regard to the navy.

After the events we have recited, Lieut. Porter was detached from the Experiment, and ordered as second lieutenant to the frigate Constitution, the flag ship of Commodore Talbot who commanded the squadron. When Porter joined the Constitution he was suffering from the wound received in the fight of Leogane in the contest with the Picaroons; but we do not find that the impaired condition of his health interfered at all with his efficiency. A short time after he joined the Constitution, the commodore gave him a command, an account of which will be found in the following extract of a letter from Isaac Hull, the first lieutenant of the Constitution, who afterwards, in command of that vessel, obtained a glorious victory over the British frigate Guerriere.

Lieut. Hull says: "Soon after you joined the Constitution, Commodore Talbot gave you command of the Amphitrite, a small Baltimore built schooner, that had been made prize of by the Experiment when you were first lieutenant of that vessel. While we were fitting this vessel and putting her guns on board (which were small brass howitzers, taken from the tops of the Constitution), we discovered some barges in shore, inside a reef of rocks, where they were discharging an American vessel they had made prize of. You were ordered to stand in with the schooner and bring them out. Not a moment was lost, you instantly left the ship, stood in boldly and brought the barges to action. As they considered their force superior to yours, they did not wish to abandon the prize, but in a very short time you captured and brought off the largest barge, and prize brig, and, no doubt, you would have taken the other had you not been prevented from pursuing her by your vessel's grounding on the reef, and thumping her rudder off. All this was done in a very short time, and in very gallant style, and met the entire approbation of Commo-

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dore Talbot; as did every act of yours while you were under his command."

This letter was drawn forth from Commodore Hull in 1838, in consequence of an application to him to state whether he considered Porter entitled to a pension, and the result of several such communications from distinguished officers in his favor finally procured for Porter the magnificent sum of ten dollars per month, that being the amount (for half disability pension), at which the law estimated the value of one arm disabled, a bullet through each thigh and a shattered constitution. And here we cannot help digressing, to show the different manner in which such things are estimated in the British navy. When Nelson lost his arm the law allowed him to go straight to the pension office and receive his smart money, amounting to some hundreds of pounds sterling; when he afterwards was wounded and went as before to draw the amount due for disability it was promptly forthcoming, being again some hundreds of pounds, the pension agent saying pleasantly, "I hope soon to see you minus a leg which will give you a good round sum." "I hope so too," said Nelson, "as it is very pleasant to receive these little reminders." With us an officer would have to work hard to get his ten dollars a month, as was the case with Porter in 1838. It cost him as much to get his allowance as it was intrinsically worth.

On the third of February 1801, a treaty of peace between France and the United States was signed, thus ending the struggle which laid the foundation of a navy destined, afterwards, to make itself so famous. Looking at this quasi-French war, from any point of view, the successes of our countrymen, upon the ocean, will appear remarkable. The war was not, as is popularly supposed, a mere brush between the two nations lasting a few weeks, and marked by the interchange of two or three broadsides; for the fact that war against France was not formally declared by congress did not make the struggle less earnest. Both parties went to work resolutely, the French, from their superior force, considering it presumption in her former ally trying to contend with her, and the Americans indignant at the treatment received from a nation that should have

acted their friend to the last. In this war the Americans displayed an intuitive knowledge of naval affairs which showed them to be worthy descendants of the "Mistress of the seas." We had really no right to expect such successes as crowned our arms; and it was natural that our officers and men should have been somewhat elated with their exploits, and the nation proud of its navy. The comparative ease with which we had gained successes over the French gave the officers of our navy rather a poor opinion of Gallic prowess on the ocean. They did not, however, relax their own discipline because that of their enemies was not good; but, on the contrary, they exerted themselves, still more, to improve the condition of their fleet, so that they should lose none of the advantages already gained. It was the ambition of our officers to outstrip even the British in the perfection of discipline, for many of them saw, in the future, a strong probability of war between the United States and England; and many who had received slights from the English officers, even hoped the time would come when they could try their youthful skill on their more experienced rivals.

With the incoming of Jefferson's administration, congress decided that most of the ships should be sold or laid up; and the hope of seeing a respectable navy that would grow up with the country was abandoned. When the ships were sold, many meritorious officers were discharged from service, but Lieut. Porter was fortunate enough to be retained; the reputation he had gained, during his short service, having brought him prominently to the notice of the government.

In the desire of the American people to ignore all the precedents, established by the monarchial governments of Europe, and even to avoid the semblance of imitating their institutions, they tried to maintain a strictly civil form of government in all departments, irrespective of their requirements. In addition to the influence of this sentiment, was the misfortune to the navy of having the president opposed to all military establishments, and in consequence a system was adopted not at all suited to a branch like the naval service. Had it been otherwise, the navy would probably have started upon its journey under

very much better auspices. As it was, a civilian was placed at the head of the navy department who had no knowledge whatever of naval affairs, and without a single naval assistant to advise with him on matters purely professional. No civilian can by any accident be familiar with all the details of a naval organization, no matter what his opportunities have been, the experience of three quarters of a century has demonstrated this.

The policy of Jefferson's administration was diametrically opposed to that of John Adams, owing to the extreme political feeling which then prevailed. Mr. Jefferson was strongly in favor of reducing the navy to a very small figure; and so much opposed had he been to hostilities against France, that he seemed now to be anxious to remove from the minds of the French people every unpleasant feeling, and to destroy the navy which had humiliated them before the world. So, although congress had authorized a naval peace establishment of moderate dimensions, the discretionary power allowed the president enabled him to reduce it to a low condition, and finally, to cripple it altogether, by the introduction of the gun-boat system. At this epoch, the navies of Europe were administered by naval men, of whom, the best were selected as ministers of marine; and a system of bureaus prevailed under the supervision of professional experts, pretty much the same that obtains at present. At that time, so perfect a system was maintained in France and England, that, notwithstanding their gigantic naval establishments, great economy was practiced. It was their naval organization that made them powerful, and no country ever yet arrived at a respectable condition in this respect until they adopted a purely naval administration in the management of their fleets.

Since the days of Jefferson, our navy department has, with brief exceptions, been conducted in the most haphazard style; and there has frequently been an immense deal of extravagance committed under the plea of economy, whenever it has been suddenly necessary to equip a fleet for some emergency, or to lay one up after the emergency had passed. Had we in 1801, formed a proper naval peace establishment with one of the *distinguished* officers of the French war at its head, and had this system been continued

to the present day, with such modifications as time and circumstances required, we should have had at this moment a navy second to none. Since 1798 we have spent on our navy one billion, four hundred millions of dollars, and yet have comparatively nothing at the present moment to show for this immense outlay.

A political disquisition may seem out of place in a work of this kind; but we can hardly avoid it when glancing at the history of the past, and reflecting what magnificent opportunities have been neglected to build up a navy, adequate to the wants of the country; for, even if we had no commerce, we must always depend upon a navy to defend our coasts.

It is a fact that our national legislators have displayed a very creditable liberality towards the navy, especially within the last twenty-five years; but they have committed one grave error, in not keeping all the departments of the navy outside the arena of politics, by the enactment of such laws as would assure the proper disposition of the money appropriated for its support. The politicians who have taken the most interest in getting naval appropriations through, have never desired to see naval officers holding positions independent of their control, and introducing systems of economy and responsibility which would naturally tend to lessen political patronage. The navy, instead of being considered a branch of the government never to be diverted from its legitimate purposes, has been looked upon as a necessary aid to the party in power; and, it is to be feared, that the liberality extended to it, has been due to that fact, rather than to any other circumstance. The naval patronage has become a stepping stone, to enable a few men to attain power without regard to the great injury inflicted upon, what must be, the chief bulwark of the nation against foreign aggression. To these causes is chiefly due the slow growth of our navy; the liberal appropriations, made by congress, being too often diverted to subserve political interests. Whatever may be done in other directions, such a system should be strictly excluded from the navy, or the consequences will be severely felt; especially should a war break out with any European power.

The system of naval administration, from 1801 to 1812, was a great hindrance to our commanders in the last war with Great Britain, and the system practiced during several wars has cost the United States government many extra millions.

CHAPTER IV.

AS we have once before remarked, it would be out of the question to write a memoir of Commodore Porter without entering into the causes and consequences of the naval movements in which he to a greater or less degree participated, although these matters may be already familiar to many of our readers who have interested themselves in the history of those times. At the close of the French war, a law of congress decreed a small peace establishment for the navy, to form a basis on which to expand, should the necessity arise for an increase of force. Fourteen vessels were accordingly retained, viz:

	Guns.		Guns.
Constitution, . .	44.	New York, . .	36.
United States, .	44.	Essex, ...	32.
President, . . .	44.	General Greene, .	28.
Congress, . . .	38.	Boston, ...	28.
Constellation, .	38.	Adams, . . .	28.
Chesapeake, . .	38.	John Adams, .	28.
Philadelphia, .	38.	Enterprise, . .	12.

Many of the vessels bore prominent parts in the history of the country, and some of them are in the navy at the present moment.

Notwithstanding the great popularity which the navy had obtained in consequence of its brilliant services during the French war, the above named vessels were all that

escaped the auctioneer's hammer, and though it was almost certain that we should soon be involved in a war with the Barbary powers if we refused to continue paying them disgraceful tribute, few efforts appear to have been made in or out of congress to prevent the sacrifice of vessels which had lately performed such gallant service for the country.

Although the ocean swarmed with privateers the commerce of the United States did not diminish during the continuance of hostilities with France. Our merchantmen followed their avocations as usual, only taking the precaution to go to sea well manned and armed. Their confidence, however, may be attributed to the exceeding vigilance of our cruisers, and to the enemy's caution in approaching an American vessel. It seems hardly credible that the United States, after going to war with her best friend (one of the most powerful nations of the world), should in the flush of victory consent to pay tribute in money, ships and naval material to Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis; but such was the case, and in the year 1800 the George Washington, Captain Bainbridge, was sent to Algiers with tribute for the dey. What must have been the feelings of the gallant Bainbridge, who after fighting so bravely in defense of his country's honor, was entrusted with this humiliating duty. But naval officers must obey their orders, no matter how unpalatable they may be. Had our government left more to their discretion in dealing with the Barbary powers we should have had little trouble with those freebooters. Let the reader imagine what would be his feelings, at this day, if he heard that congress had made an appropriation of $100,000, to be sent out in a national vessel, by way of bribing the dey of Algiers not to molest our merchant ships on the high seas; yet the men who did this thing were as patriotic as those of to day if not more so; but it was not until the navy had taken the initiative against these piratical governments, and taught them to respect our flag, that the country began to question the propriety of paying tribute to any one. The only consolation, in this humiliating business, is to be found in the fact, that nearly all the governments of Europe paid tribute to the Barbary pirates; and instructed their officers

to maintain friendly relations in this way. This seems all the more strange, as most of these powers could, in a week, have hermetically sealed all the Barbary ports.

War with Tripoli had been threatening for some time, and as soon as peace with France was declared, we prepared to send a small squadron to the Mediterranean. In 1800, the usurper bashaw of Tripoli, Yusef Caramalli, showed a disposition to hostilities with the United States on the ground that we had not treated him so well as we had the bey of Tunis, who had received a frigate, while he had received none; that the dey of Algiers had received a higher bribe than he had been paid to refrain from troubling American commerce. So this mighty potentate wrote threatening letters to the president, informing the latter that his performances must agree with his promises, and that any delay would be very prejudicial to American interests. Imagine a barbarian writing such letters, now-a-days, to the president of the United States. In spite of all our caution and indisposition for any more war, the government found that the time had arrived for action, and the idea of sending a squadron was to avert the necessity of hostilities. But before the ships could be got to sea the barbarian bashaw, tired of waiting for his present of a frigate, proceeded to cut down the American consular flagstaff at Tripoli, which was at once in his opinion the greatest insult he could offer, and a declaration of war against the United States.

The American squadron consisted of the President 44, Capt. James Barron; Philadelphia 38, Capt. S. Barron; Essex 32, Capt. Bainbridge; and Enterprise 12, Lieut. Com. Sterrett, all under command of Commodore Dale, who hoisted his broad pendant in the President. Lieut. David Porter held the position of first lieutenant on board the Enterprise. When the squadron was fitting out, he might easily have obtained the position of first or second lieutenant on board one of the large ships; but experience had taught him that the best chance for active service and promotion was to be found in a small vessel; and the Enterprise had made such a brilliant record under her former commander (Shaw), that Porter felt proud to be on board of her.

In sending this squadron to the Mediterranean our government proceeded with great caution. It seemed to have lost sight of the recent successes of its navy, and only required the officers not to submit to exactions except under certain circumstances; that is, if the Barbary powers had not formally declared war, Commodore Dale was to pay the *tribute*, which was carried out in the ships to Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis; but if war had been declared by those powers, the commodore was ordered to act against them, but was particularly directed to leave the Mediterranean by the first of December, as it was not considered safe to cruise there in winter. Such instructions were certainly not very encouraging to a high spirited officer like Commodore Dale, the ci-devant lieutenant of Paul Jones; but there was nothing for him to do but to carry out his orders, and the squadron accordingly sailed for Gibraltar, where the ships came to anchor on the first of July. Here they found the Tripolitan admiral, a renegade named Lisle, in command of a ship mounting 26, and a brig mounting 16 guns. No doubt this person was all ready to proceed to the Atlantic ocean, for the purpose of capturing American merchant vessels, but the timely arrival of the squadron prevented such a movement. The commodore immediately sent all his vessels to cruise, in different directions, with orders to protect our commerce against these freebooters, in case they should get out. He also visited Tunis and Algiers in the flag-ship, and had the satisfaction of promoting the peace by his presence. It may be that the expected arrival of the George Washington with tribute, contributed to the peaceful attitude now assumed by the Barbary powers, who probably wanted to get all they could before proceeding to hostilities.

The Enterprise was the first vessel that had the satisfaction of humbling the pride and lowering the flag of these corsairs. Notwithstanding the Tripolitan admiral had assured Commodore Dale that no war existed against the United States, on the part of Tripoli, on the first of August, 1801, the Enterprise fell in with a polacre-rigged vessel, near the island of Malta, mounting 14 guns (and carrying Tripolitan colors), that was known to be cruising against our commerce. As soon as the colors were recognized,

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the Enterprise cleared for action, and ran down close to the enemy. As Lieut. Com. Sterrett got within pistol shot he opened his batteries, and continued for three hours to pour in a heavy fire, at the end of which time the Tripolitan struck his colors. The polacre was superior in every respect to her antagonist, but the precision of the American's fire told fearfully upon the enemy and her crew, while the beautiful manner in which the Enterprise was handled (taking whatever position she chose and raking her enemy several times), elicited the admiration even of the corsairs. There are no braver people than the Turks, but on this occasion though they fought desperately they exhibited very little skill. The corsair lost fifty men in killed and wounded, and the ship was a perfect wreck, her mizzen mast shot away and her yards and sails cut to pieces. On the other hand, owing to the skill with which the Enterprise was handled she received little damage. Three times during the combat did the Tripolitans strike their colors, renewing the fight again when they thought they saw an opportunity of redeeming the fortunes of the day; till at length Lieut. Com. Sterrett, irritated by this treachery, opened fire, with a determination to sink his enemy; when the Tripolitans threw their flag into the sea and cried out for quarter. The Tripolitan proved to be the Tripoli commanded by Mahomet Sous, and the latter confessed that his orders from the bashaw were, to capture American merchant vessels.

Captain Sterrett hardly knew what to do with his prize now that she had fallen into his hands. His instructions had been so carefully worded, that he was not allowed to carry the vessel into port as a prize; so after beating the pirate vessel, he had to let her go again, to prey upon American commerce as opportunity offered. It is difficult to ascertain, at this late day, who was the author of this miserable policy; certainly no naval officer had anything to do with it, and it will be noticed how different was the policy pursued towards our French opponents. At length, after consultation with his officers, Lieut. Com. Sterrett ordered Lieut. Porter to dismantle the prize, which order was effectually carried out; all her armament, powder and shot was thrown overboard, and to use a nautical expres-

sion, the ship was "stripped to a girtline," having left but a single spar and sail with which to creep into port as best she could. The captain, Mahomet Sous, looked very woe-begone on seeing the dilemma in which he was placed, and doubted if he should be able to reach port at all; but fortunately it was the summer season, when the weather is generally good, and Lieut. Com. Sterrett, after doing what humanity required for the wounded Tripolitans, and admonishing Capt. Mahomet to behave himself in future, started the rover on his homeward voyage, amid the jeers of the Yankee tars, whose amusement at this novel proceeding was perhaps not unmingled with disgust at the loss of their prize money. The rage of the bashaw may be imagined, when his vessel finally managed to reach Tripoli, and instead of a ship loaded with plunder he had only an empty hulk with a disgraced captain and crew.

The stupid brutality of those Barbary despots, seventy-five years ago, is almost incredible. They had been accustomed to prey upon the commerce of nations of ten times their own strength, and the idea of a small power (as they considered the United States), daring to resist one of their cruisers and then send her into port in such a pitiable plight, was more than Turkish temper could endure. The effect of sending the vessel home turned out to be better than keeping her as a prize, for the whole Tripolitan community had a chance to satisfy themselves that the Christian dogs had indeed defeated a Tripolitan ship of war; and the crew of the corsair could tell them how the Giaours were obliged to fire enchanted shot before they could overcome the followers of the prophet. All the excuses of Captain Mahomet Sous, however, went for nothing in the estimation of his master, the bashaw, and although he showed his wounds, and told how desperately he had fought a formidable vessel with a great number of guns, yet the despot would not listen to his appeal for mercy. He had the unfortunate captain paraded through the streets of the city tied to a jackass (the utmost degradation that could be inflicted on a mussulman), and then bastinadoed until he could not stand. The sailors of the Enterprise would have been consoled for the loss of their prize money could they have known the rage and mortification of the bashaw,

and the pitiful condition of "Mahomed Sous." If, however, this worthy potentate supposed that his treatment of the Rais Mahomet Sous would have the effect to make his corsairs fight better in future, he was greatly mistaken, for the panic, among the sea going fraternity, became so great between their dread of defeat at the hands of the Americans on one side, and their fear of the bastinado on the other, that it was found difficult to obtain seamen for the corsairs then fitting for sea. In fact the wholesome lesson given by the Enterprise was not lost upon the Tripolitans, who were exceedingly cautious about venturing to sea the whole time the war with the United States was carried on.

Could the administration have foreseen the effect of the first naval measure against the Barbary pirates, it is not likely that Commodore Dale's powers would have been so restricted, and the pirates would have been brought to terms in a very few months. The curious idea seemed to prevail with our government, that a ship of war, in case of attack, could not without express sanction of congress, do anything more than defend herself; that is, must let a vessel depart after thrashing her well, so as to repair damages and be able to renew the attack. This was a kind of international courtesy that the navy did not appreciate, and notwithstanding the sagacity with which President Jefferson is credited, he would seem in this matter to have been very far out of his reckoning, and not to have at all comprehended the situation of affairs. While the president was arguing in his message to congress, that the government could only act on the defensive against a nation that had declared war against the United States, and that he required authority from congress to enable him to act offensively, the commodore, taking a common sense view of the case, had blockaded the port of Tripoli and had captured neutral vessels attempting to enter the harbor. Commodore Dale's orders required him to return to the United States by the first of December, and after making what he considered the best disposition of the vessels under his command, he returned home with the frigate President, and the schooner Enterprise. Thus ended what is considered the first year of our war against

the Barbary powers, which was only relieved from obloquy (consequent upon the pusillanimous orders of our government), by the exertions of the navy. The only guns fired during this time, so far as appears from the record, were those of the Enterprise, and from what we know of the energy and ingenuity of Lieut. Porter, we are justified in the belief, that to him was due a large share of credit in the capture and ultimate disposition of the Tripolitan cruiser. Certain it is, that this affair contributed more towards securing good behavior from the corsairs than could have been hoped at the time; and two vessels, that lay at Gibraltar ready for sea, on hearing the news of their comrade's fate, dismantled the ships and sent their crews across the straits to Tetuan, and thence by land a distance of 1,300 miles to Tripoli. Whether the captains of these cruisers were treated to a jackass ride, à la Ginevra, winding up with the bastinado, history does not inform us.

On the arrival of the President and Enterprise in the United States, their crews were discharged and a new one shipped for the Enterprise, which vessel was attached to a new squadron originally fitting out under Commodore Truxton, who was however succeeded by Commodore Morris, who hoisted his broad pendant in the frigate Chesapeake. The vessels of the squadron not being all ready and there being a necessity for their services in the Mediterranean, such as were equipped were ordered to proceed to sea. Commodore Morris assumed command of this squadron under much more favorable auspices than his predecessor (Dale), for he could now hope to be allowed to punish the Barbary pirates and maintain the honor of our flag without the risk of censure from the United States government. In 1802, congress virtually declared war against Tripoli, at least they enacted laws which were sufficient to quiet the constitutional scruples of President Jefferson. Authority was given to our naval officers to capture and condemn any Tripolitan vessels they might encounter.

Commodore Morris had under his command what was considered to be the most efficient squadron ever put afloat by the United States, and on his arrival in the Mediterranean he proceeded to blockade the harbor of Tripoli, hoping by this means to bring about a peace. The general

operations of this squadron are too numerous to particularize in these pages, as they are fully described elsewhere; our object is simply to trace the career of David Porter, now first lieutenant of the frigate New York, to which vessel, on the reduction of the squadron, Commodore Morris had shifted his broad pendant. The squadron now comprised the New York 36, Adams 28, John Adams 28, and Enterprise 12. On the 10th of May, 1802, while the New York was on the passage to Tripoli, at the moment the drum was rolling to grog, a heavy explosion was heard in the vicinity of the magazine, and the lower part of the ship became filled with smoke. The order was given to beat to quarters, and the men went quietly to their stations, observing perfect discipline. The situation was critical, for a considerable quantity of powder had exploded. Commander Chauncy, followed by Lieut. Porter, proceeded immediately towards the magazine through the passages filled with smoke, and after great exertions succeeded in putting out the fire.

In the latter part of April, 1802, Commodore Morris arrived off Tripoli with the New York, Adams, and Enterprise, and as the squadron stood in towards the harbor several small vessels, convoyed by gun boats, were seen close in with the land and making the best of their way to the port of Tripoli. The squadron immediately gave chase, and the enemy finding themselves cut off from the harbor, sent the merchantmen into the port of old Tripoli; while the gun boats, by means of their sweeps, were enabled to pull under shelter of the batteries. The merchantmen were small lateen-rigged craft loaded with wheat, and as soon as they got into port preparations were made for their defense. It was impossible for the squadron to follow them in, for the port was full of reefs and there were no reliable charts. A large stone building stood on a bank, near the shore, which was occupied by a body of soldiers, and on each side were thrown up breastworks, composed of sacks of wheat taken from the merchant vessels, which were themselves finally hauled up high and dry on the beach close to the building, and a large reinforcement of troops was brought over from the city to man the breastworks. The best engineer could not have

made a better disposition of forces, and the Tripolitans might well consider their works impregnable to an assault by boats and sailors. When we look at the chart we cannot exactly see why the Tripolitan vessels should have escaped from our squadron, but such was the fact, however mortifying to Commodore Morris. Lieut. Porter seeing the annoyance of the commodore, immediately volunteered to go in that night with the boats of the squadron and destroy the vessels; but the commodore decided to wait until daylight next morning, that the ships might coöperate, hoping to intimidate the Tripolitans by a show of force. However, Lieut. Porter was permitted to reconnoitre the place under cover of night; but in the performance of this duty, was discovered and driven off by a heavy fire of musketry. Next morning, the commodore accepted Porter's offer, and Lieut. James Lawrence of the Enterprise volunteering to accompany him, he set out backed by a strong party of officers and men from the several ships. When the attacking party got within musket shot of the enemy, the Tripolitans opened a heavy fire which the Americans had no opportnnity of returning, for in that day boats were not provided, as at present, with howitzers firing shrapnel, so beautifully fitted with fuzes, as to burst at the exact time and place required; they had, in fact, none of those modern improvements in ordnance which would soon have disconcerted a party behind breastworks such as protected the Tripolitans. So on the Americans kept without firing a shot, and landing, in face of a greatly superior force, set fire to the vessels and regained their boats; which opening, to the right and left, allowed the ships to complete the work by the fire of their batteries. Notwithstanding this was a gallant attack, it was barren of results except to show the Turks the determination of the people with whom they had to deal; for although it was supposed that the fire from the ships would deter the enemy from any attempt to extinguish the flames, yet impelled by the fanaticism which sometimes seizes on the followers of Islam, they persevered in spite of the hail of shot poured in by the ships, and finally succeeded in putting out the fire and saving their vessels. While leading the assault, Lieut. Porter received a severe wound

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from a musket ball in the left thigh, and a slight wound in the right thigh; but in spite of these he continued in command to the last. "During the attack the contending parties were so near each other, that the Turks actually threw stones at their opponents." The Tripolitan fire was very heavy, twelve or fifteen Americans being killed and wounded. The loss of the Turks was never ascertained. Lieut. Porter was laid up, for a time, with his wounds; and it was greatly to his annoyance that he could not participate in several handsome affairs that came off while he was disabled, though notwithstanding his wounds he had volunteered to renew the attack that same night.

The Americans soon found that their appliances for carrying on the war against Tripoli were entirely inadequate for the purpose. It had recently become the fashion to mount carronades on board our vessels of war, for the purpose of firing shot of heavy calibre at close quarters; but, although this kind of ordnance answered well enough in a fast sailing ship, that could get alongside her antagonist, they were wholly unsuited against stone walls, at long range; as were, likewise, the light twelve and eighteen pounders, which composed a considerable portion of our vessels' armaments. Vessels fitted out for such service as battering the stone walls that constituted the defenses of Tripoli, should have been armed with long guns of the heaviest calibre and accompanied by a force of good mortar boats. The Tripolitans had a sufficient number of long brass twenty-four pounders, mounted on their works, which could reach a ship outside the line where it was prudent for the American vessels to come (owing to the depth of water), to render it imprudent for a few ships to attack the town. The enemy had also a number of gun boats and galleys, good sized vessels heavily armed and capable of going to sea, in emergencies, having been constantly employed in convoying vessels along the coast, and in cutting off any stray store ship or other small vessel that might get too far from the protecting guns of the larger ships. Some of these gunboats had mounted a brass gun 11½ feet long and weighing 6600 pounds with a bore to receive a twenty-nine pound shot. Each gunboat had, besides the long gun, two brass howitzers mounted

aft to keep off boats. These vessels then, when formed in line to act conjointly with the forts, made a powerful addition to the strength of the place. As they were able to move at will from one point to another by means of their sweeps, they formed a naval force, which, if it had been skilfully managed, would have rendered it hazardous for even a large vessel to venture within range. The gun boats were generally kept moored inside the rocks and under the guns of the town. Several attacks were, by order of the commodore, made on these defenses; which, though exhibiting the gallantry of our officers and seamen, were not productive of any benefit, neither party suffering materially in the encounters.

Cooper, in his Naval History, has done justice to the subject in his account of these events; and not to recapitulate, I will merely mention that Commodore Morris was recalled by the government, which did not feel at all satisfied with the management of the force entrusted to his care. When the commodore reached the United States he was severely punished for not doing more when he really lacked the means to accomplish anything. Of this the government were ignorant, but found out their mistake when obliged to send large reinforcements which should have been sent in the first place.

As late as 1812, no professional man was ever employed to stand between an officer in command and the displeasure of the government; and so much injustice was committed in consequence, that it is a wonder how any man, of high spirit, could be found to command our squadrons abroad. Owing to the fact, that through partiality or political influence, men were appointed to command who were not always suited to the service required of them, disappointment was the result, and upon the individual was too often thrown the odium of failure, which properly belonged to the administration. This course it is probable was thought necessary by a popular government to justify themselves before the people, and keep themselves in office; but had a little professional ability been called to assist in the councils of the nation, there would have been fewer mistakes in naval management and much less national humiliation. The history of our government unfortunately shows,

that some of the politicians who have presided at the head of our navy, have oftener lent themselves to breaking down the reputation of officers, than exerted themselves in efforts to uphold them; and have frequently failed to judge them impartially, or to protect them when unjustly assailed; and nearly all the secretaries of the navy have exerted their political influence to curtail the authority granted by congress to naval boards or bureaux, whenever the authority of the said boards came in conflict with their wishes, or interfered with their political patronage, without regard to the injury such action might inflict upon the navy. The acts of a department not properly represented by professional men particularly in the army and navy are frequently characterized by petulance and harshness to officers in command, whose actions, very likely, have been strictly governed by orders from headquarters; and there is little likelihood that an officer of high rank will ever receive that courtesy and consideration to which he is entitled, when the department is not influenced by that sense of justice which is characteristic of the naval profession.

CHAPTER V.

IN the latter part of 1803, the Philadelphia 38, Capt. Bainbridge, was directed by the commodore to proceed to Tripoli accompanied by the schooner Vixen, Lieut. Commandant Smith, and keep up as close a blockade of that port as the weather would permit. It was getting late in the season and the perils of that coast would not permit a continuous blockade in mid winter. Lieut. Porter had been transferred from the New York to the Philadelphia, as 1st lieutenant. He was now twenty-three years of age, and had been five years in the service, but in common with

other young officers of the period he exhibited remarkable proficiency in his profession, and handled a ship with as much skill as many old seamen could have done. Educated in the school of Truxton and Rodgers, he was a strict disciplinarian, exacting strict obedience and attention to duty from all under him, while exhibiting in his own person an example of subordination to his commanding officers' wishes, which gained for him the lasting esteem of Capt. Bainbridge. It could not be expected that an officer, brought up in so severe a school as Porter had been, would not sometimes be guilty of harshness to his inferiors. He was impulsive and sometimes too severe, but his impetuosity was tempered by a generous spirit, and he always endeavored to repair, by every means in his power, any act of injustice which he felt he had committed. With all his severity, therefore, Porter was very popular, especially with the crew, in whose care and comfort he took great interest, a quality in an officer which seamen highly appreciate. For the midshipmen's welfare he was also solicitous, though the latter thought him unreasonable for insisting on their close application to study; and never on any account to neglect a duty. This was what his models Truxton and Rodgers had required from him, and Porter, in turn, exacted it from others. He was of a chivalric nature, and would not for the world have had any body think that he took advantage of his position as 1st lieutenant to persecute him. He was once told by a young officer of about his own age, "that he was wanting in magnanimity, in treating with harshness one beneath him in rank who had not the privilege of holding him responsible." This mortified Porter exceedingly at the time, and his first impulse was to place the officer under arrest (which he could have done with propriety), but soon recovering his equanimity, he said: "The inequality of our rank need not interfere with any demand you may think proper to make on me, and I shall demand satisfaction of you for reflecting on the integrity of my motives." Now this was not exactly a proper position for a first lieutenant to place himself in, but it was a generous impulse that induced Porter to waive his rank to a junior who considered himself aggrieved.

This affair was, however, amicably settled, and the two remained friends the rest of their service together.

The navy of those days was a fine school to bring out in relief the noble qualities of those brave spirits who were ready to make any sacrifice, and run any risk in the cause of their country. All seemed ready to share each other's dangers, and divide equally the honors won by all. There was little jealousy, but like a community of brothers the officers of the navy rejoiced in each other's good fortune, and contributed to it by every means in their power. Honor was the watch word, and those selfish feelings which are apt to creep into a military profession in time of peace, inducing officers to seek their own advancement, regardless of the claims of others, had no existence in the Mediterranean squadron. When we remember the noble emulation which then existed, when seniors were even willing to serve under their juniors, and where applications for desperate enterprises were so numerous that it was difficult to say who should not join in an expedition, we can well understand how success should follow the efforts of such gallant souls, and what sacrifices they stood ready to make for their country when led by Preble, the master spirit among a throng of young heroes. It was an era of chivalry, never we fear to come again, for it can only exist at that youthful age when men's selfish passions have not begun to usurp the place of generous impulses. Porter's character, however, underwent little change as he grew older; with him the child was really the father of the man.

Under the care of her experienced captain and energetic first lieutenant, the Philadelphia was in most excellent order, and under the gallant Preble (who was expected shortly to take command of the squadron), the officers expected glorious opportunities for distinction; but all were doomed to severe disappointment by the loss of the ship off the harbor of Tripoli. At 9 A.M. on the 31st of October, 1803, while the frigate was about five leagues off shore, to the eastward of Tripoli, a ship was descried in shore standing to the westward before the wind. Chase was immediately given to the stranger, who hoisted Tripolitan colors, and continued her course close along the coast. About eleven o'clock, the frigate was so near the shore that the water

shoaled to seven fathoms. The Philadelphia then commenced firing on the enemy, which was kept up by running before the wind for half an hour, when, finding it impossible to prevent the vessel's escape, the pursuit was abandoned. The frigate then bore off the land to get into deep water, but ran on to some sunken rocks, leaving her with only twelve feet of water forward, and seventeen aft. In spite of all the precautions which had been taken to prevent such a disaster, by keeping three leads constantly going, the ship struck the rocks with about eight knots headway. All sail was immediately set to force her over what was supposed to be a bank, but which was in reality a smooth shelving rock, on which the vessel had run as far as her impetus would carry her, and there lay hard and fast. Finding that his attempt to force the ship over did not succeed, Captain Bainbridge asked the advice of the first lieutenant as to what was best to be done, and the latter advised a consultation with the commissioned officers. Meanwhile perfect order reigned throughout the vessel, and all hands were busy in efforts to get her off.

Boats were lowered, and soundings soon showed that there was no deep water near the vessel, and it was apparent to all that without some stroke of good fortune she would be lost. The enemy's gun boats, nine in number, were soon seen coming out of the harbor of Tripoli, and cautiously approaching to reconnoitre the Philadelphia, of whose condition they were apparently aware. At length repeated soundings showed deep water astern, when the sails were braced aback, the guns run aft, and the anchors cut from the bow; but all attempts to move the ship were unavailing. All the guns were then hove overboard, with the exception of a few reserved for defense against the advancing gun boats. Meanwhile the frigate had heeled over very much to port, in which position she remained fixed, and the enemy passing under the fire from the stern battery, took up a position on the starboard and weather quarter, where no guns could be brought to bear on them.

It was now that Capt. Bainbridge realized the mistake he had made in sending off the Vixen in search of a Tripolitan cruiser, that had got to sea a short time previous. This had left him alone in the frigate to blockade

Steamship and Capture of the Richard Cobden.

Steamship and Capture of the Richard Cobden.

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a port where the chasing had to be done in-shore and in shoal water, a duty which could be far better performed in a vessel of light draft. Moreover, had the Vixen been present she could have kept the enemy's gun boats at bay while the frigate was being extricated from her perilous position. Capt. Bainbridge now summoned another council of war, who were of opinion that the water in the hold should be started and pumped out, then all heavy articles were thrown overboard, and finally the foremast was cut away; but all this had no effect in moving the ship. Orders were then given for the carpenter to bore holes through the bottom, and for the gunner to drown the magazine, in fact every precaution was taken to render the ship useless to the Tripolitans, should they unfortunately obtain possession of her.

During all these operations, the enemy having taken a position where they could not be harmed by any fire from the Americans, kept up the attack from half past one o'clock until sunset; but the Philadelphia appears to have suffered from it only in her spars and rigging. It was now evidently impossible to prevent the capture of the Philadelphia; and to prevent a useless sacrifice of the lives of his officers and men, Capt. Bainbridge gave the order to strike the colors. Up to this time the enemy had kept at a respectful distance, but no sooner were the colors hauled down, than the gun boats made a rush for the frigate, and in ten minutes the decks were swarming with the pirates, who began to plunder the unfortunate Americans of everything they possessed, even stripping off their clothing, and leaving them nearly naked.

The officers were soon carried before the bashaw, who was highly delighted at this capture of prisoners to add to his list of slaves, but on the whole his reception of them was not unkind, and they were conducted to the late American consulate, and placed under the particular charge of the minister of foreign affairs, Mahommed D Ghies, with whom they had no difficulty in communicating as he spoke French fluently. Considering that the bashaw was a barbarian his treatment of the prisoners was generous. They were supplied with sufficient food, but suffered greatly for want of clothing. Most of the officers had laid in a three

years outfit, and had lost every thing except what they stood in when captured. How they were to be clothed in future, unless they adopted the Turkish costume, they were at a loss to imagine. Fortunately, they found a friend in the person of Mr. Nissen, the Danish consul, who was introduced to Capt. Bainbridge by Mahommed D Ghies, and this gentleman immediately relieved the prisoners' anxiety, promising them every assistance in his power, which promise he kept to the letter. The minister, Mahommed D Ghies, also manifested the most friendly disposition, intimating to the prisoners that they might depend upon his humanity; and Mr. Nissen, having done all that he could for them at the time, the officers found themselves much better situated than they had reason to expect from the rough treatment to which they were subjected when first captured.

Up to the time of the capture of the Philadelphia, the bashaw had received from the Americans nothing but humiliation, or to use the figurative language of the Turks, "The Christian dogs had made him eat dirt." He had made few or no captures of American merchant vessels, and his corsair ships had been either captured or blockaded in some foreign port. The capture of the Tripoli, and the treatment of the vessel, was the greatest indignity that this Barbary despot had ever received; and, under the circumstances, it seems wonderful that the bashaw should have been so complaisant as to address words of consolation to his prisoners. The bashaw had begun to feel very despondent, for independently of his losses he felt that his influence among his subjects was declining, and when this feeling arises in barbarous countries, especially when distrust occurs among the troops, the distance from the throne to the grave is short, the bow string is put in requisition, and does its work effectually. But this night the bashaw felt particularly joyous, and so he said, "Let the Christian dogs eat, drink and be merry, for they will bring us a ransom more than the value of the vessels we have lost."

Next morning the Tripolitans set to work to get the Philadelphia afloat. The frigate was on shore about three miles from Tripoli, and as the corsairs had plenty of large

launches, anchors, and cables, and an unlimited number of men, they felt sanguine of saving the vessel. Two days after they got to work the wind came out strong from the northwest, and forcing the water up on the African coast the ship's stern floated. Anchors were now carried out astern, the whole force at the disposal of the bashaw was applied to the work, and in three days from the commencement of operations the Tripolitans had the Philadelphia afloat. She was towed to within a short distance of the town, and there remained until the weather abated; the Tripolitans pumping night and day to keep her free of water. The Americans supposed that they had effectually destroyed the pumps by dropping shot into them, but if such was the case the Tripolitans soon rigged up others, and the carpenter had scuttled the ship so imperfectly that the holes were stopped without much trouble. Barbarians as they were, the Tripolitans were smart sailors, and taking advantage of the good weather following the northwest gale, they not only succeeded in taking the Philadelphia into port, but in weighing all the guns and anchors which lay in the clear shallow water around the ship, so that there was scarce an article thrown overboard that was not recovered. The American prisoners were deeply mortified to see the Philadelphia repaired as well as circumstances would admit, the guns all mounted, and the anchors in their places. They had confidently expected that she would have thumped her bottom out in the northwest blow, but it happened she was to leeward of a reef, and the sea broke over her without lifting her much, which accounts for her not going to pieces.

The unwonted kindness of the bashaw did not long continue. From the first he had intended to treat his prisoners as circumstances might occur. He had no doubt that the United States government would now listen to reason, and enable him to propose his own terms of peace. He had three hundred and fifteen prisoners, including twenty-two quarter-deck officers, and rightly supposed that there would be great excitement in the United States over the reduction of all these people to slavery; and hoped to obtain a large amount of money by way of ransom. Previous to this, the bashaw, rather alarmed by the

determined attitude of our government, had seemed inclined to listen to terms of peace, but having now gained what he considered a great advantage, he was anxious to continue the war.

Commodore Preble, who was now in command of the squadron, immediately on hearing of the capture of the Philadelphia, made a proper disposition of his forces, and arrived off Tripoli in the latter part of December 1803; but after communicating with Capt. Bainbridge and learning the situation of affairs; he returned in the Constitution to his headquarters at Syracuse, as hostile operations could not be conducted at that season of the year. The first proposition to destroy the Philadelphia came from Capt. Bainbridge and his officers, who took every opportunity, before they were rigorously confined, to ascertain what were the facilities for an active enemy attempting such a task; and the commodore was notified, through Bainbridge, that the vessel was slowly fitting to cruise at sea.

We have all read of the gallant affair of the burning of the Philadelphia by Stephen Decatur in the ketch Intrepid; and as our history will deal as little as possible with matters in which Porter was not personally an actor, we must refer our readers to the chronicles of those times. The rage of the bashaw at the destruction of the Philadelphia was unbounded, and one effect was to increase very much the rigors of his prisoners' confinement. The satisfaction of the latter, when they saw the flames which destroyed their old ship lighting up the harbor of Tripoli, was of short duration. The sailors were put to work carrying stones on their heads and shoulders to repair the fortifications; and at this laborious employment they were kept from morning till night, exposed to the burning sun, and supplied with very insufficient rations. Instead of beef, tough camel's meat was served out to them, and the bread was a miserable article composed of beans instead of wheat. The officers, although not compelled to labor, had their comforts much curtailed; and the provisions served out to them were of the poorest description. Thus, for upwards of nineteen months, were the unfortunate Americans subjected to a rigorous confinement; the United States government paying no heed to the exhorbitant de-

mands of the bashaw, who required as a ransom for his prisoners the sum of $160,000; for, by noticing favorably such a demand, they would have virtually abandoned the principle for which they had been contending. Thus our government was reduced to the painful alternative of leaving their citizens to remain in prison; but resolving to adopt the most energetic measures against their piratical enemies. Notwithstanding the uncomfortable predicament in which our officers and crew were situated, they never murmured at this determination of the government; but, on the contrary, were most anxious that no terms should be entered into for their relief, not strictly honorable to the United States. The officers, seeing that their confinement was likely to be a long one, endeavored to provide against that dullness which is the invariable accompaniment of captivity.

Consul Nissen continued his kind offices and supplied the captives with books; and Porter, whose spirits never flagged, and who never lost an opportunity of encouraging those around him, established a school of instruction for the younger officers, in which all joined. These exercises consumed a greater portion of the day; and evening was spent in such pastimes as could be invented or remembered from among those of their younger days. In this way time passed, if not joyously, at least not uselessly. Lieut. Porter instructed the midshipmen in fleet-sailing, seamanship, navigation, and gunnery, for which all expressed their indebtedness to him in after years. His own education had been very deficient, for his father could only send him to elementary schools; and he, therefore, took advantage of this opportunity to improve his own mind. He pursued the study of mathematics and the French language, read history carefully, devoted much attention to English grammar, became proficient in right-line drawing, and obtained a fair knowledge of the art of landscape drawing, all of which he considered necessary parts of an officer's education. It can easily be imagined what a dreary time these captives would have had, shut up in prison for nearly two years, and without the opportunity of communicating with their friends, had there not been some leading spirit to animate them. Captain Bainbridge was allowed a room

to himself, in consideration of his rank; his health was not good, and his spirits being greatly depressed in consequence of the loss of his ship, he passed many lonesome hours shut up in his apartment; thus the responsibility of keeping alive the spirits of the party devolved upon his first lieutenant.

The prisoners made many ineffectual attempts to escape, in which Porter always took a conspicuous part; but these attempts had no other result than to increase the severity of their imprisonment. One day they opened communication with the seamen, who on going to their daily work had to traverse a narrow passage past the quarters where the officers were confined. The seamen working on the walls had frequent opportunities of witnessing the operations of the American squadron, and of seeing the preparations of the Tripolitans. By some means a hole was cut through the wall between the officers' room and the passage, and written communications handed through. This continued without discovery for a considerable time, until at length, grown bold by frequent success, an officer one day undertook to converse with the men going through the passage. The sound of the conversation was overheard by one of the officials appointed to urge the prisoners in their work, the plan was discovered and immediately reported to the Tripolitan officer on duty. The moment this man was informed of what had transpired he rushed into the captive officers' quarters, his eyes glittering with rage, and demanded to know who had dared to open that hole in the wall; when Lieut. Porter, without a moment's hesitation, stepped forward and took the blame upon himself. A guard was summoned and Mr. Porter was marched off to the bashaw; his companions, much alarmed at his prospective fate, anxiously waiting to hear what had befallen him. In a few hours Porter returned uninjured to his companions. He had frankly acknowledged his offense to the bashaw, at the same time taking the opportunity to tell Jusef Caramelli how harshly the prisoners were dealt with, protesting in the name of his government against such treatment. Strange to say, the despot, instead of displaying his usual rage, promised to give the matter his consideration, and restored the offender to his anxious friends. The hole

was stopped by the bashaw's order; but from that time their treatment was much improved.

It was a very disheartening thing for those officers to be cooped up when they knew their friends in the squadron were reaping such a harvest of fame, and from Lieut. Porter's character we can imagine what a conspicuous part he would have taken in the different encounters which were continually taking place between the hostile parties, had he been at liberty to offer his services. They had all to remain quiet, much against their will, and their only consolation was the news of the glorious feats of their comrades outside, which was communicated by their friend Mr. Nissen. The prisoners were frequently in danger from the shot and shell of the United States squadron, which often struck their prison. Once a heavy shot passed through the castle wall into Captain Bainbridge's room, knocking the stones and mortar on to the bed where the captain was lying and nearly burying him in the rubbish. Bainbridge was instantly pulled out of the debris by his officers, severely injured; and, notwithstanding the danger to which himself and companions were exposed by the bombardment, he wrote to Commodore Preble urging him to keep up the fire with the mortars, at every opportunity, as it demoralized the Tripolitans very much, and would do more than anything else to bring them to terms.

All things will have an end, and the Tripolitan war was no exception to the rule. The United States government at last discovered, that the economical system pursued towards the navy in the early part of Mr. Jefferson's administration, was not the one to ensure success against a stubborn enemy; so after many earnest appeals from Commodore Preble, who on his return to the United States in 1804–5, gave all the necessary information on which to base further arrangements for prosecuting the war, a squadron was ordered to be prepared for sea, which, when completed, would increase the force before Tripoli to fourteen large vessels carrying 304 guns, ten gun boats carrying 17 guns and two bomb vessels. The Tripolitans, seeing that the United States were determined to prosecute the war until they were conquered, concluded

at length to succumb, and on the third of June, 1805, the treaty of peace was signed.

It was agreed that the United States should never be required to pay tribute to Tripoli, but after exchanging prisoners man for man it was settled that $60000 should be paid to Tripoli for the excess of prisoners in her possession. This latter clause in the treaty sounds rather strangely after such loss of life and outlay of money in prosecuting the war; and, no doubt, the United States could have made better terms by carrying on hostilities a little longer, but the sufferings of the prisoners in Tripolitan hands were exciting so much sympathy at home, and the expense of further warfare would have been so great that, perhaps, the course pursued may have been the wisest. It was a joyful day when all these poor fellows were released, and received the congratulations of their friends; but amid all their joy at being relieved from confinement, the prisoners could not but experience deep sorrow when they missed the many comrades who had fallen before the walls of Tripoli. A few years had made sad havoc among their friends, but such is ever the result of war.

In this conflict the American nation, which had been fighting for the rights of civilized nations, had won great renown through its navy, and the thanks of Christendom for setting an example that was soon followed by all Europe. When we look at these insignificant Barbary powers to-day we can hardly realize that we ever consented to pay tribute to them in the first place, and in the last act abandoned all the principles for which we had contended by paying that ransom of $60000. With all this, however, the navy had nothing to do, and had the matter been left to them to decide, the barbarians would never have got anything, since they knew that they could conquer a peace. Throughout the trying ordeal they had to undergo, the honor of the navy remained untarnished; and painful as had been the imprisonment of the officers and crew of the Philadelphia, yet it produced good fruit, for without the loss of that vessel and its results, the government might have abandoned a contest which in the end put a stop to the enslaving of Christian people.

At the close of the war, Commodore Rodgers remained

in command of the Mediterranean squadron, which had been considerably increased, in order to overawe the Barbary powers from any further molestation of American commerce. He immediately gave the command of the favorite Enterprise to Lieut. Porter, and ordered him to Tripoli, with discretionary power to cruise through the Mediterranean for a time and recruit his shattered health, the result of his long imprisonment. Porter had, previous to taking command of the Enterprise, performed the duty of captain of the Constitution, the flag ship of Commodore Rodgers.

Much as the navy had done to raise the reputation of the American flag, there were not wanting those who took every opportunity to depreciate its achievements; and this was particularly the case with the officers and men of the British navy, who on several occasions treated those on board the Enterprise in such a manner as to call forth the prompt resentment of Porter and his officers. On one occasion, while the schooner was lying in the harbor of Malta, an English sailor came alongside in a shore boat and heaped the most abusive epithets upon the whole ship's company, incited, no doubt, by the cavalier manner in which certain of the British officers at that time treated our navy — not that there were no honorable exceptions, for many of those in the royal navy fully appreciated the gallantry of our countrymen in the late contest with Tripoli. The officers of the Enterprise had, on several occasions, been mortified by the treatment they had received in Malta, and were much incensed by the conduct of the sailor whom they considered as merely an agent acting for others. The man was ordered away from the side and threatened with the displeasure of the authorities, which only called forth further abuse and taunts towards the American flag, which seemed to be the special object of his disgust; and finding that neither persuasion nor remonstrance had any effect, the commander of the Enterprise had him brought on board and administered to him a good flogging at the gangway. This, it must be confessed, was rather an arbitrary proceeding, but it was the result of impulse which did not stop to consider what might be the consequences. Lieut. Com. Porter thought

only of resenting an aggravated insult in what seemed to him the most appropriate manner. This event created considerable excitement in Malta, people not taking time to consider the provocation offered by the sailor. The governor took the matter up with great warmth, and without paying the American commander the courtesy of inquiring into the merits of the case, he directed that the Enterprise should not sail until the affair was investigated, ordering the commanders of the forts in the harbor to prevent her passing out. Captain Porter informed the governor that he intended to sail at a certain hour, that any complaint against him must be made to the United States government; and that he would defend his vessel if attacked. Accordingly at the appointed time the Enterprise got under way and proceeded to sea, the crew at quarters with lighted matches all ready to fire upon the town in case the vessel was molested. The governor, no doubt, when he came to reflect upon the matter, saw that Porter's action towards the sailor was just what that of a British officer would have been under the same circumstances; and, moreover, knew that he had no right to detain a ship of war for a matter that could be settled by a reference to the United States government. As no such reference was ever made, it is fair to suppose that the governor finally came to the conclusion that Capt. Porter had done what was about right.

The Enterprise continued her cruise down the Mediterranean, and along the coast of Morocco, looking out for American interests; and while passing through the straits of Gibraltar, in sight of the town and the British squadron lying at anchor in the harbor, the schooner was attacked by twelve Spanish gunboats that ran out from the harbor of Algeciras. What was the object of this unexpected attack we are not informed. As soon as Capt. Porter saw the gunboat approaching with hostile intent, he hoisted his colors and prepared for action; the Spaniards took no notice of the flag but attacked the schooner at once. There was no doubt of the Spanish superiority, the gun boats were latteen-rigged vessels of some size, and each armed with a long gun; but, in a very short time, the fire of the Enterprise caused them to ignominiously retire, and left a

lasting impression, upon the minds of the Spaniards, of the efficiency of an American vessel of war, and the spirit which animated its commander. Porter had now been nearly five years in the Mediterranean, and the Barbary pirates being all comparatively quiet he returned to the United States.

On the 22d of April, 1806, he received his commission as Master Commandant (commander). At this time congress authorized the president to employ as many public vessels as he might deem proper, but limiting the number of officers and seamen. By this act, the number of captains was increased to 13, and that of master commandant to 8 — Porter standing number 5 on the list of the latter. At this time the navy, considering its record and the necessity which existed of keeping up a respectable force, had fallen into rather a disreputable condition as regarded the vessels. The Tripolitan war had been rather an expensive affair for those days, and it was no sooner over and the matters of dispute arranged with the other Barbary powers, than the government proceeded to hastily reduce the navy expenses within the limit of their resources. Unfortunately, they proceeded to an extreme economy not justified by the financial condition of the country, which was certainly able to maintain as large a navy as the one we had on hand when hostilities with Tripoli terminated; but no effort seems to have been made to increase the navy so that it might be useful in the future. Our commerce had extended to a remarkable degree, and the sails of our merchant ships whitened every sea. Our enterprising countrymen were now competing successfully with Great Britain, a fact which began to attract the attention of the British government, who ever alive to their own interests began to manifest towards us those unfriendly feelings which finally brought us into hostile collision with them. The policy of our people, then as now, seemed to be averse to maintaining a naval establishment of any size, although our political relations were never free from embarrassment, and we were open to the aggressions of the smallest naval power which chose to be unfriendly towards us. Our coasts and harbors were notoriously indefensible, except by a naval force; yet it was now determined to introduce

a new system to protect our shores, which it is certain could not have been thought of had the naval element possessed any influence in the administration of the department. This was the famous "gun boat system," of which so much was expected and from which so little was realized. During the time the discussions were going on, in congress, in relation to abolishing the old system and adopting the new, there was little employment for officers, notwithstanding the small number retained in the navy; consequently Porter was not able to get a command afloat. He was now at the age of twenty-six, a commander after only eight years' service, a rapid promotion compared with the present day, when a man under thirty is hardly considered competent to take charge of a steamer's deck! There must be something radically wrong in the present condition of affairs unless we are to believe that very inexperienced officers were in early days placed in command of our ships of war. As the results obtained at that time were in most instances highly satisfactory to the government and people, perhaps it would be well to introduce the same system again in the service.

The great success of our infant navy was mainly owing to the indomitable energy and fearless bravery which are the concomitants of vigorous youth, and those dashing qualities are often more than a match for the vaunted experience which is too often accompanied by timidity, when the blood is beginning to circulate sluggishly. Age has its attributes and is valuable in council, but it would be unnatural, when the vigor and elasticity of youth are gone, to expect successes such as would be secured by younger and hardier men.

When naval officers are unemployed they are apt to seek solace in the society of the softer sex, a rule to which, as we shall see, Commander Porter was no exception. Hitherto, during his eventful life, he had had few opportunities to mingle in society, and the only woman who had held a place in his heart was his good mother, whose death had caused him great affliction. This void in his affections had to be filled, and with his natural impetuosity he set about filling it. Commodore Tingey, who then commanded the Washington navy yard, had

visiting in his family a very pretty young lady, Miss Evelina Anderson, daughter of William Anderson, a wealthy gentleman of Chester (Pennsylvania), and a member of congress from that district. When Commander Porter was introduced to the young lady he found her playing with a doll; for although she was in society she had just left school, and was barely fifteen years of age. As, in duty bound, he fell in love with the young lady, and after a very short courtship solicited her hand, and was referred by Commodore Tingey to Mr. Anderson (the young lady's father), who was at the time in Chester, Penn. Commander Porter posted at once to Chester, and the family being apprised of his coming had prepared to give him a flat refusal, for a naval officer was considered by no means an eligible match, his pay being small and his roving life a bar to connubial happiness. The young lady's only brother, Mr. Thomas Anderson, was highly indignant at the idea of a naval officer wanting to marry his sister; and, being, in his own opinion, somewhat of a fire eater, he was deputed by the family to receive the audacious suitor (instead of the more amiable and yielding father), and give him a flat refusal, the young lady's feelings not being taken into consideration at all. So when Porter made his appearance he was shown into the parlor, whither young Anderson soon repaired, and in a freezing tone asked him his business. The young officer replied that he wished to see Mr. William Anderson in relation to his daughter, and could only communicate to that gentleman what he had to say. "Then sir," said the brother, "you have come on a fool's errand, my father cannot see you and you cannot marry my sister or be connected with this family." The Commander jumped from his chair, his eyes flashing fire. "Sir," he exclaimed, "you are meddling in a matter that does not concern you. I came here about marrying your sister, I didn't come to marry you, and d—n you if you don't leave the room I'll throw you out of the window." The young gentleman was quite taken aback, and thinking the fierce looking little fellow might carry out his threat, and that discretion was the better part of valor, sought his father, whom he informed that there was a piratical looking man down stairs who in-

sisted upon marrying his sister; he was certain that the man would cut every body's throat if he didn't get her, and he washed his hands of the matter. The result was that after a week's acquaintance all the family took a great liking to the would be bridegroom, and the required consent was given to the marriage. Young Anderson, who had a strong sense of humor, often related this incident to show Porter's rough way of wooing, which was in fact his impulsive manner of doing everything.

Commander Porter and Miss Anderson were married on the 10th of March 1808, and received as their marriage present from the young lady's father, what was at that time a very handsome residence on the banks of the Delaware in the borough of Chester. The house though erected in 1721, as shown by an inscription on the gable, is still standing and the massive stone walls are yet in good preservation. It was originally the residence of the colonial governor, and still remains in possession of the family.

The Commander was not long permitted to indulge in the quiet of domestic life, but was soon called away to active duty, where we propose to follow him.

CHAPTER VI.

PRIOR to 1800, when Louisiana was tributary to Spain, there had been granted to the United States, by treaty with that power, the right of deposit at New Orleans, which right was reserved in the treaty ceding Louisiana to France. The suspension of this privilege by his Catholic majesty, created a great sensation throughout the country bordering on the Mississippi and its tributaries; for it was evident that the continuation of this prohibition would be very injurious to the United States; and it was agreed, that an appeal to arms would be far preferable to quiet submission

to an edict, that would shut us out from the navigation of the great outlet to the ocean. In the first excitement, congress, moved by a determination to maintain our boundaries and commercial rights, prepared for an appeal to arms in case of a failure in negotiations; and hence originated the act requiring a certain number of gun boats to be built and equipped to be used as the president might think proper; but when the matter was investigated, it seems to have been the opinion that the breach of contract was the unauthorized misconduct of the local authorities rather than an intentional violation of the treaty on the part of the home government. Upon this the United States government ceased the equipment of gun boats intended for the Mississippi.

When, in 1803, Louisiana was ceded to the United States, fifteen of these gun boats were finished and sent to New Orleans to assist in maintaining the authority of the government among what was then a very turbulent population. A station was established at New Orleans in command of a naval officer who was entrusted with far greater powers than he would be at the present day, and the officers and men under his command amounted to nearly four hundred. This was the origin of the gun boat system which subsequently increased to such proportions as to almost swamp the navy, although for most of the duties of vessels of war the gun boats were totally useless. As it may not be uninteresting to follow up the increase of this kind of force, and to note the various circumstances that occasioned it, I present a brief summary of the progress of a system from which so much was expected and so little realized.

On the 2d of March, 1805, twenty-five additional gun boats were authorized. Several distinguished naval officers were consulted as to the efficiency of these vessels for harbor defense, and they all agreed that in conjunction with land batteries they *might*, if well armed and manned, be very useful; but this recommendation only extended to a particular kind of service. At that time our coasts were infested by foreign vessels of war which paid little regard to our neutrality. Americans were looked upon as a set of traders too mean to have a naval policy, and who would

not resist encroachment at the risk of involving themselves in war. Our harbors had also been watched by private armed vessels which had committed piratical acts beyond the authority of their commissions. The president, accordingly, fitted out a small squadron to cruise on our coasts to arrest all such offenders for trial as pirates. The public armed vessels of foreign powers were hardly less oppressive to our commerce, and in fact we were considered fair game for anybody to pluck, and actually invited aggression by failing to keep up a naval force adequate to the wants of the country. In consequence of having their attention called to these aggressions, by the president, congress passed an act to build *fifty more* gun boats! although half a dozen brigs or schooners would have been ten times as efficient. The capture of the Chesapeake on the 22d of June, 1807, aroused a feeling of indignation throughout the United States and, consequently, on the 18th of December, of that year, congress enacted that the number of gun boats should be increased to *one hundred and eighty-eight.* Of these gun boats it may be remarked that they were absolutely useless except as an auxiliary to fortifications or for the defense of shallow waters.

The first gun boats for service in the waters of Louisiana were built under the superintendence of Commander John Shaw, the officer who made such a brilliant record while in command of the Enterprise during the French war, who in 1806, was ordered to command all the naval forces in the waters of the new territory of Louisiana. Shaw retained this command until the close of 1807, when he and Porter were members of Barron's court martial. At the close of the trial, Porter in 1808, just after his marriage, was ordered to proceed to New Orleans and assume command of all the naval forces, including the station on shore, and the naval forces afloat consisting of some twenty of the aforementioned gun boats. This was an important appointment, as great responsibility devolved on the Commander, who being far from the seat of government was frequently called upon to act in very delicate cases. The government at that time seemed to be always in great fear of becoming involved in war, and had submitted to every conceivable humiliation to avoid such a contingency; and

although eminently successful in redressing grievances when the task was once fairly undertaken, they had not learned from past experience how to provide against aggressions.

The bays and inlets of Louisiana were the rendezvous of privateers and pirates claiming to sail under the flags of England, France and Spain. These gentry were continually hovering on our coasts, and in default of finding enemy's ships would seize upon our own, upon one pretext or another, for which outrages our people obtained little redress. New Orleans being at that time an ungarrisoned place, not frequented by foreign ships of war, many of the privateers resorted there for supplies; and, as they spent their money freely, the local authorities rather encouraged their presence. These desperadoes, mixing with the dissolute part of the population, kept the town in a continual state of turmoil. During the administration of Governor Claiborne in Louisiana, in 1807, the greatest excitement prevailed in regard to the alleged design of Aaron Burr to seize the city of New Orleans, and take from the banks the large amount of specie therein deposited. The apprehension that Burr had many adherents among the desperate characters who infested New Orleans, intensified this feeling of dread. General Wilkinson had been ordered to Louisiana with a large body of troops, and the officer in command of the naval station, anticipating an attack from some quarter, had, on his own responsibility, enlisted four hundred seamen to man the gun boats, and afford assistance to the civil authorities in case of necessity. Governor Claiborne writing to the federal government says: "My solemn belief is, that the seizure of this city and her riches was the primary object of the conspirators, and the dismemberment of the union the ultimate aim of the leaders. I believe the horrid plot has been promoted by foreign influence, and that Spain has furnished Burr with his pecuniary means," etc. It may be conceived how excited the people must have been at the rumors of Burr's operations along the Mississippi, and the movements of their Spanish neighbors, who were supposed to be endeavoring to narrow the western limits of the United States by inciting dissensions among our people. New Orleans was

tremendously excited. When the arrest of Burr put an end to this excitement, other troubles arose; for New Orleans was never quiet for any length of time; an emeute was always forthcoming on the slightest provocation.

On the fourth of July, 1807, several gun boats were anchored off the city, and a planter in their vicinity undertook to whip a female slave, whose shrieks being heard by the naval officers, three of them accompanied by a few sailors entered the planter's enclosure and released the woman by force. This affair caused another tremendous excitement, and the fury of the populace could hardly be controlled. The naval officers were looked upon in a measure as the tools of an oppressive government. In the case of Edward Livingston, the navy had to be called in to support the local government in putting down a tumult that was near ending in bloodshed, and in fact there were so many "choice spirits" in and around New Orleans always ready for desperate enterprises, that the forces of the army and navy were always in readiness to preserve order.

It was just after the Livingston affair, and in the midst of excitement, that Commander Porter was ordered to New Orleans. The appointment was a high compliment, the general government evidently placing great reliance on his ability to assist the territorial governor in putting a stop to any measures which might affect our interests. In the beginning of August, 1808, just after Commander Porter had relieved the naval officer in command at New Orleans, several serious affrays between American sailors and French, Spaniards and Italians of the same class took place, which occasioned the governor great uneasiness. The contending parties met on the levee in battle array, and many were killed and wounded on both sides. Some persons supposed that the foreign sailors had been stimulated to this quarrel, in order to cover a more dangerous conspiracy; but, whatever might be the cause of these riots, there was certainly a large number of dangerous characters in New Orleans requiring the utmost vigilance on the part of the authorities to keep them in subjection. At this time the celebrated embargo was declared by the United States, and war, at any time, was now expected

with Great Britain. To complete the list of troubles ever since the cession of Louisiana to the Union, constant losses had been experienced by the inhabitants living near the borders of the Spanish possessions, and many escaped negroes resorted to the protection of the Spanish flag. At Nachidoches, large numbers of negroes, mounting the Spanish cockade, had marched off to Spanish territory, singing "Long live Ferdinand the seventh." Under the circumstances, it was not unlikely that we would soon have war with England and Spain at the same time. About the only defense to the Mississippi river at this critical moment was its strong current, and there was no knowing when a hostile fleet might overcome that obstacle and appear before New Orleans.

The census of 1806, showed the entire population of the territory to be 52,900 souls, of which nearly one-half were slaves, and upwards of three thousand free people of color, leaving but 26,069 white persons. Of these 13,500 were natives of the territory and descended from French ancestors, and *only* 3,500 were *natives* of the United States. The rest of the inhabitants were made up from a mixture of all the nations of Europe, who were loyal to that extent that they did not care to risk their lives against a foreign foe who was their superior. All together the condition of affairs, while Porter was in command of the New Orleans station, was anything but pleasant, and under frequently embarrassing circumstances, he acquitted himself with great credit. In fact he never exhibited greater judgment than he showed amid the difficulties which surrounded him in New Orleans.

Owing to the several attempts to obstruct the execution of the laws, congress by an act approved March 3d, 1807, authorized the president "in all cases of insurrection or obstruction of the laws, either of the United States or any individual state or territory, where it is lawful for the president to call forth the militia, for the purpose of suppressing such insurrection, or of causing the laws to be duly executed, it shall be lawful for him to employ for the same purpose such part of the land and naval forces of the United States as shall be adjudged necessary." This act legalized all naval proceedings at New Orleans.

So many illegal acts had been committed by the privateers of the several European powers that were warring against each other, that congress, on the representation of the executive, felt justified in passing the "Restricting act," compelling all vessels within the waters of the United States to abstain from interfering with European commerce or our own, under the penalty of confiscation; yet notwithstanding the careful wording of these laws, the privateers found little difficulty in evading them, and made New Orleans the place of sale for their illicit gains. The sea, in fact, at that time swarmed with legalized pirates; and the Spanish government, and our own, were offering large rewards to any one who would capture certain French freebooters that had been depredating on their commerce. These bounties amounting to upwards of $80,000, were offered as an additional stimulus to officers and men to perform their duty.

Commander Porter, on his arrival at New Orleans, found a very loose state of affairs prevailing, so far as related to the execution of the law against the illegal proceedings of the privateers, but in a manner his hands were tied. The district attorney evidently winked at the piracies committed in our waters and at the open communication kept up between these depredators and the citizens of New Orleans. At first, Commander Porter could see no way of preventing these illegal proceedings without coming in collision with the civil authorities, at that time considered a very reprehensible matter, and incurring the censure of the administration. Politics too ran very high at the time, and a naval officer, without influence, had to exercise great caution to avoid having his head cut off, politically. An opportunity, however, soon occurred which enabled Porter to ascertain how far his authority extended to prevent the violation of the restriction laws, and whether the honest efforts of an officer to maintain these laws would have the support of the administration. He had hardly reached New Orleans before he was taken down with the yellow fever and laid many days at the point of death; but, as soon as he could get about, he commenced enforcing the restriction laws, much to the chagrin of the district attorney, who was evidently opposed to all his measures.

Three French privateers came into the Mississippi river and anchored at the place now called Pilot Town, their *nominal* object being refreshment and repairs. One of these was the Montebello, a large schooner of fourteen guns. She had been fitted out at Baltimore, and had had her guns put on board at sea. This was one of the vessels for which Spain and the United States had offered a reward. Another one of the vessels, the Intrepid, was a large Spanish built schooner sailing under a commission originally granted to a pirogue. She was heavily manned and armed. The third privateer, the Petite Chance, was a schooner the strength of which is unknown to us. As soon as Commander Porter heard of their arrival he repaired to Pilot Town with a force of gun boats, and anchored where his guns would bear upon the privateers; at the same time, calling on them to surrender for a violation of the restrictive acts. At first they refused, being advised by the district attorney that a naval officer had no authority to detain them; and he urged the Commander to let them depart, which the privateers agreed to do and also to leave the waters of the United States. The many friends of the buccaneers, in New Orleans, made every exertion to obtain permission for them to depart, and a direct conflict arose between the civil and naval authority, which culminated when Commander Porter informed the privateer captains that in default of their immediate surrender he should open fire. The vessels were decidedly superior to Porter's gun boats in force, and their captains were disposed to resist, but the crews refusing to fight, the privateer's colors were hauled down. As the law gave an officer no power to detain the crews, the latter were permitted to go up to New Orleans, and the vessels were soon after taken to that place and moored to the levee under the guns of the navy.

The city was thrown into an uproar by the arrival of these privateersmen, who roamed the streets at will, committing all sorts of excesses, and confident from the representations of their friend, the district attorney, that the vessels would soon be released. Commander Porter having libelled these vessels as prizes, it became the duty of the district attorney to prosecute them on behalf of the government. The case was a perfectly plain one, and

under an honest official there could have been no doubt of the result. The district attorney had in the first place declined to consider the vessels as derelict, but when assured by Commander Porter that he would send them north for adjudication, both the district attorney and the governor of the territory withdrew their objections and the former consented to prosecute the case. As Porter had no confidence in this person, he took care to associate with him able counsel upon whom he could rely. While the subject of libelling the vessels was merely a subject of discussion their crews committed no overt acts, but the moment the case came into court they assumed a threatening attitude, thronging into the court room and trying to overawe the judge, but a guard of marines soon put a stop to their demonstrations. They then threatened Porter with personal violence, but he continued to walk the streets as usual, accompanied only by his orderly, although taking the precaution to keep a guard near his quarters at night.

Through the efforts of Commander Porter all three of the prizes were condemned and sold, and the proceeds divided among the captors, after taking out the largest share in fees to the lawyers and officers of the court, in which distribution the district attorney was not too conscientious to participate. Thus was broken up a formidable nest of pirates (for they were nothing better), through the untiring energy of a fearless officer.

These prize cases gave Porter a great deal of trouble, from first to last, from the fact that the legal authorities, whose duty it was to prosecute them, not only placed every obstruction in the way; but, when the prizes were condemned, it was supposed induced the captains to bring suit against Porter for detaining them. Out of the prize money, Porter bound himself to pay half the proceeds to the captors. Twenty per cent of his own portion went towards paying lawyers fees and all contingent expenses, and he was held accountable for damages in case of a decision against him. He had to defend the Montebello against a suit brought after her condemnation. He also had to make arrangements to defend the Petite Chance in the supreme court of the United States, to which an appeal from the district court decision was taken. Edward Liv-

ingston, Porter's counsel, received five per cent of the net proceeds of his fourth, leaving him in the end with very little prize money.

The reward offered by the authorities of Havana was a subscription from the Spanish merchants, offering $60,000 for the capture of the three vessels, Montebello, Intrepid and Petite Chance. When the condemnation was an established fact, Commander Porter put in an application for this sum, giving the necessary proof; but, although the Spanish authorities acknowledged the great value of the service rendered to Spanish commerce, yet they declined to pay the reward without an order from the home government. The captain, who had gone to Havana in reference to this business, was kept so long dancing attendance that he was nearly impoverished. The reward promised was never paid, though in 1826, when Porter was offered the position of commander-in-chief of the Mexican navy, the Spanish government, through their minister at Washington, offered to pay him the whole amount with interest, if he would decline the offer of the Mexicans, which proposition he proudly spurned. In the end he had the satisfaction of costing the Spaniards many times the amount so unjustly withheld from him.

On Commander Porter's return from New Orleans, he was directed to settle his accounts. He had credited himself with double rations, to which he was entitled; but, it appears that this had been checked against him during the two years he remained in command. He had long been disgusted with the management of naval affairs, and he had no confidence in its justice. The government, instead of helping him to secure the rights he had honestly gained, gave themselves very little trouble in the matter, on the contrary opposed him. The different kinds of duty an officer had to perform then on the pay of subordinate rank, was another source of disgust, and to crown all, the Commander was outraged by the manner in which our country was constantly humiliated by England, without a declaration of war. Writing to his friend, Purser Samuel Hambleton of the navy, he says in regard to this matter: "What more can the English do to us than they have done, and

why should we submit to these things for the sake of saving our commerce? There are some things dearer to a nation than the wealth of its citizens on shore or on the ocean, and that is its honor, and when we fail to esteem that in advance of all else, we will stand poor indeed in the world's estimation." In consequence of his dissatisfaction Commander Porter tendered his resignation in July, 1810, but received from the secretary of the navy a very complimentary letter declining to accept it, urging the Commander to remain in the navy as his services would shortly be wanted "to resist the wrongs and support the rights of the country."

Soon after Commander Porter was *promised* the command of the Essex, to which his only objection was that it was not right to expect him to fill a captain's position without giving him the pay of that rank. But as there was a prospect of war he waived all personal considerations and concluded to remain in the navy; he positively declined to remain in New Orleans, the two years that he had served there in command satisfied him that he was not calculated to come in contact with the military authorities or politicians in that quarter. "He was satiated with Governor Claiborne's vanity, and with General Wilkinson's pomposity, and was convinced that they all looked upon the country as a big orange which they had a good right to squeeze." Porter set his face against their operations on the domain under his charge, and found himself opposed by a swarm of enemies of whom he never dreamed.

The general government finally approved of Porter's whole course in regard to the prizes, and made him prize agent to distribute the proceeds. When he died minister at Constantinople his accounts were audited and found entirely correct, but this $25000 prize money was checked against his estate thirty-eight years after it had been distributed; and his family, to whom he could leave nothing, were kept out of the balance of pay due him as minister until the prize lists were found filed among his papers, and his last accounts with the government were closed in 1846!!

These proceedings against the privateers were soon noised abroad, and during the rest of the time Porter commanded the New Orleans station there were few in-

fractions of the restricting laws. While in command at New Orleans his father, David Porter senior, was ordered to report to him for duty. The elder Porter had received from President Washington the appointment of sailing-master in the navy, which had been reconfirmed to him on the 3d of September, 1807, and he desired to pass his declining years under his son's roof. Mr. Porter's duties were merely nominal, but he took great delight in serving under his son's command, and these were probably the happiest hours of his life. The old gentleman who had served faithfully during the revolution was a man of fine nautical ability and with a strong sense of humor. He was the author of some amusing works, and edited an edition of *Falconer's Shipwreck*, with characteristic notes. His great work was a treatise on *The Origin of Man*, in which he showed conclusively that human beings were gradually developed from jelly fish into mermen and thence to their present form. This was a satire on the predecessors of Darwin, who were then promulgating their strange theories, but was particularly aimed at the famous Lord Monboddo, who had advanced the extraordinary idea that the human race are nothing but a lot of monkeys who had worn off their tails by sitting for so many ages on hard bottomed chairs! Strange to say the death of this genial old gentleman was the means of introducing into the naval service one of our most renowned naval officers, David Glascoe Farragut. While the elder Porter was one day fishing on Lake Ponchartrain, he had a stroke of the sun, and was found by Mr. Farragut, the father of the future admiral (who was also out fishing), in an exhausted condition. Mr. Farragut took the sick man to his home on the banks of the lake, where he and his wife attended him carefully until his death, as he was never in a condition to be removed after this attack. Commander Porter was deeply grateful for this attention to his father, and Mr. Farragut being in moderate circumstances with several children to support, he proposed to adopt David and bring him up in the navy; which offer was accepted, and young Farragut transferred to his new home where he was treated as a son.

Farragut, who was then but seven years of age, was

placed at school to commence his education, and on the 17th of December 1810, Commander Porter obtained for him an appointment as midshipman in the navy and kept the young man with him for several years, until after the capture of the Essex, carefully training him in his profession. In fact, as long as Porter remained in the service and had opportunities of serving his adopted son, he looked out for the latter's interests. It is not too much to attribute Farragut's success as an eminent naval commander to the careful training he received while with Captain Porter.

On the first anniversary of his wedding Commander Porter received an addition to his family in a son, born March 10, 1809, an event which greatly delighted him. The child was named William after his maternal grandfather, and for many months after his birth was so small that he could sleep in a cigar box, and being too small to be dressed, was rolled up in cotton. The father was accustomed after dinner to have this youngster handed around the table lying on a napkin in a plate. The child became ultimately a man of over two hundred pounds weight, an illustration of the truth of the old saying, "tall oaks from little acorns grow." He served through life in the navy, and distinguished himself in the war of the rebellion. His death in 1865 was in consequence of injuries received in battle on the Mississippi, while in command of the ironclad Essex.

The comparatively inactive life that Commander Porter led at New Orleans by no means suited his taste. He had accepted the duty much against his own inclination, and was anxious for a change. He had long been of opinion that war between the United States and Great Britain was inevitable, for no country could long endure the open insults offered to us without taking up arms to defend her rights. *Prior* to taking command at New Orleans, Porter had been much exercised in mind with regard to the actions of the British naval forces, which were continually impressing our seamen and firing on unarmed merchant vessels; and he desired to be then where he could be immediately employed afloat in case of war. Congress, to prevent these aggressions, had passed a

law, on the first of April, 1806, providing that the President should "keep in actual employment in time of peace as many of the frigates and other public armed vessels as the service might require." Four days after the passage of that act, the British frigate Leander grossly violated our rights by firing into one of our merchant vessels, before the harbor of New York, and killing one John Pierce, a citizen of the United States. The practice of impressing our seamen, so far from diminishing in accordance with our protests, daily increased, and finally the affair of the Chesapeake, June 22d, 1807, created intense excitement throughout the country. "At that time Commodore Douglass was in command of the British squadron off the capes of Virginia, and this officer omitted no opportunity to insult the citizens of Norfolk, and Hampton; and through them, the whole community, acting almost as if the English were at war with us. He would not have pursued this course, had not congress so restricted the president, that he could not obtain a sufficient number of seamen to man our ships and protect our citizens from insult. We were now reaping the reward of that wretched policy of false economy, forced upon the navy by the Jefferson administration, and which was finally condemned by congress."

In the latter part of 1810, in anticipation of hostilities with Great Britain, Commander Porter left New Orleans with his family, and journeyed north, up the Mississippi, in a gun boat, sometimes propelled by sails, sometimes by oars and by towing; the vessel seldom making more than thirty miles a day. After a three month's voyage on the bosom of the father of waters, Porter arrived at Pittsburg. This was the first national vessel that ever ascended the river so far up, and many of the citizens of those thinly settled regions had never before seen a naval officer, much less a vessel of war. They were, in consequence, much impressed with the appearance of the gunboat slowly making her way to the north. If any of those who were then living in the little villages (now cities), on the banks of the mighty river, and gazed with wonder on the solitary vessel, saw the great fleet of ships, iron clads and gunboats in 1862, '63, what must have been their sensations? especially

when they heard the roar of cannon reverberating from those once peaceful shores.

On the 5th of January, 1811, soon after he reached his home in Chester, Commander Porter was presented with a daughter, an event calculated to please a young father and make him desire to remain with his family; but he was constantly on the alert to avail himself of the first opportunity for active service against our British enemies. On his arrival at Chester he moved into the house presented him by his father-in-law. This place known as "Greenbank" was then very beautiful but time has since laid heavy hands upon it and the mansion is now something like an old aristocrat out at the elbows. Writing to his friend Hambleton, Oct. 22, 1810, he says: "I intend to call my new place 'Montebello' so soon as I can get some of the Montebello or Havana spoils. It happens to be nearer a bakery than a mountain but that makes no odds. The name sounds so well I cannot think of losing it. The Chester folks call me a Federalist and shun me as they would a rattlesnake because I wear imported cloth and gilt buttons. I am in hopes this name will convince them to the contrary it sounds so much like 'Monticello.'"

Our government, about worn out with British annoyance, found that it was necessary to do something to show their displeasure at the many insults that had been heaped upon our flag by British naval officers, and on the 20th of October, 18— the president, by authority of congress, issued a proclamation interdicting all British vessels of war from entering the waters of the United States. This, it was supposed, would bring on immediate hostilities; and the gallant spirits of the navy began to sharpen their swords, preparatory to the contest. Among the most prominent advocates of war was Porter, who could not obtain a command afloat, notwithstanding the promises to him; it was likely through fear that he would prove too zealous in vindicating the honor of the flag, as he has ever shown himself ready to do since that time—he looked on in astonishment to see the legislators of that time, who had scarce got out of their ears the sound of revolutionary guns, acting such a timid part towards an oppressor whom we had shown ourselves capable of humbling, even in our

infant days. Our national pride had been severely hurt, and, there was no bearing any longer British insults, and yet, owing to the inactivity shown at this time in naval matters, and the misappropriation of naval moneys (which always seems to have been a chronic disease in our national polity), we were perfectly helpless to defend ourselves, without bringing upon us humiliations greater than any we had yet borne. The British then had a force of vessels on our coast quite superior to the miserable gun boats, which were forced on us for want of experienced naval men to carry on a naval administration. The letters of Porter and others, at that time, exhibit the feeling in the navy; and he does not hesitate to point out the ill effects of the existing system. He compares the navy, in one of his letters, "to a glass of weak whiskey and water, the weak addition of the naval element having only diluted the draught without improving the taste."

The naval officers were of opinion, in which time has proved them right, that the navy should be conducted entirely by naval men. Notwithstanding all the navy had done to protect the honor of the flag and increase the prestige of the country, its officers were not consulted with regard either to the proper means of operating by sea against a powerful enemy, nor of protecting our bays and inlets against the invasions of fleets or single ships. The party in power seemed to be floundering about in a state of ridiculous uncertainty, committing egregious blunders in naval matters, as other administrations have since done; and, which, it seems, we are to continue to do until some great blow will fall upon the country, and wake them up, when too late. The administration of the navy from the beginning has been a failure; it reminds one of a green boy adrift in a boat with a single oar; he sculls, then pulls on one side, then sticks out his oar, on the other; but he does not get ahead any; he turns around in the same spot, just what the navy has been doing since its first establishment. No fault can be properly attached to individuals who have administered naval affairs, the fault all lies in defective organization. Commodore Porter with several other distinguished officers at this time advocated openly the introduction of the naval element into the administra-

tion of the service, for it was very evident that the government was actually forcing us into a war, for the want of that preparation which was so much needed. The most perfect ignorance seemed to exist in regard to fitting out and maintaining the navy.

Captain Porter in a letter to a friend says:

"The vital error, if not criminal neglect of the government, is in not introducing the naval element into the navy department. Experienced officers would have avoided the terrible mistakes which have been committed within my recollection, and we would have had now such a respectable force of frigates that Great Britain would not have dared to go to war with us, for fear of having her commerce destroyed — thirty frigates on our side would make her respect us; and yet the wise-acres who have charge of naval affairs are still clinging to their ridiculous gun boat system. Yet how can they be expected to know the difference between a gun boat and a frigate. I am sure they could not learn the naval science on their Southern plantations. The money squandered on these wretched vessels would have built up a good navy."

This was shown at a later date, when the government, gaining wisdom by experience, acknowledged that "naval officers alone were competent to conduct the intricate duties belonging to a profession of which a civilian must necessarily be ignorant." An instructive treatise might be written in relation to the ill effects of the system which the party in power tried to fasten upon the navy; the waste and extravagance which occurred, the humiliation which it brought upon the country, and the loss of many millions of dollars; but, the limits of our work will not admit of more than a passing allusion to this subject. The United States and England coquetted with each other for several years, in which neither benefited by the lessons of experience; and both losing greatly in their commercial interests by the vacillating policy of each other. In the meantime, the navy, small as it was, used their utmost efforts by keeping up strict discipline to prepare for the conflict, which they saw must, sooner or later, arrive.

"The encounter between the President and the Little Belt, in which the latter was severely cut up, caused great excitement in England and the United States. Both nations claimed to be in the right, but nothing came from the

angry controversies, but an increased alienation between the two countries; but still not a frigate was added to our navy, nor had there been since 1801." War was almost upon us, and to Great Britain's navy of more than a thousand vessels we had to oppose the following viz:

Constitution,	44	Essex,	32	Siren,	16
President,	44	Adams,	28	Oneida,	16
United States,	44	Boston,	28	Vixen,	14
Congress,	38	John Adams,	28	Nautilus,	14
Constellation,	38	Wasp,	18	Enterprise,	14
Chesapeake,	38	Argus,	16	Viper,	12
New York,	38				

While the naval forces of the country were in this weak condition, congress, for various reasons known to everybody, declared war against Great Britain, June 18, 1812. Great as may be the misfortune of war to a country, a greater calamity can befall it, the stigma of resting under insult and oppression, without making an effort to wipe out the dishonor. Whatever may have been the feelings of the citizens at large, the navy exulted at the declaration, hoping to avenge the humiliations we had experienced for so many years from Great Britain. Notwithstanding the great disparity of force between the two navies, our officers did not fear the result. The experience they had gained in the French and Tripolitan wars had given them great confidence in their ships and seamen, and all the latter burned to fight for "free trade and sailor's rights."

The frequently published statement that Porter was ordered to command the Essex after war with England had been declared, is not correct; it appears, from documents on record, that at the commencement of hostilities he had then been nearly a year in command of the frigate, to which he was appointed in August 1811, soon after the affair of the Little Belt. On the 7th of September, 1811, as appears by a letter to a friend, we find Commander Porter at Gosport, Va., where we had some sort of a fitting place, since grown to a navy yard, preparing his vessel for sea, doing the duty of a captain on the pay of a commander. This was really a high compliment, as no other officer of his grade commanded a frigate. On the 12th of

October he was at Craney island, waiting for men to be sent from Boston to complete his crew. On the 4th November, writing from Hampton Roads, he says: "I have just returned from a short cruise on the coast, and shall in all probability take another in a few days. I am much pleased with my ship and wish I could say as much for my battery. She is armed with carronades which, in my opinion, are very inferior to long guns." An opinion which, later in the war, was fully confirmed. It seems that the frigate Congress was also to have been put under Porter's command, and the two vessels were to have sailed together in search of the Shannon and Guerriere, which were reported to be on the coast. Porter was highly flattered with the prospect and expressed himself as anxious for an opportunity to wipe out the disgrace of the Chesapeake. Commander Porter continued in the Essex until the war broke out, when the vessel was in New York, hove down for repairs. To show the feeling with which Porter went into the war, we insert a letter to a brother officer, Sam'l Hambleton, dated "Off Sandy Hook, April 18, 1812," just two months previous to the declaration.

U. S. Frigate Essex,
Near Sandy Hook, April 18th, 1812.

Dear Hambleton: Yours of the 6th reached me yesterday — Wm. is reinstated and I am in hopes will do better. Write to me as soon as you receive this and direct your letter to Norfolk, where if God spares me I shall be ere long. We sail in search of the Guerriere and Belvidere, if I once get my graplins on the latter nothing short of the hand of the Almighty shall separate us, while her flag is flying — I have seen *de Crillon.* I have also seen our old friend *Chevallier* and a number of his gang — from various circumstances I am induced to believe that the latter intends *taking a passage in the fast sailing schooner purchased at Baltimore.* I am convinced they are acquainted although they do not appear so — and I think we shall soon hear of some of their exploits. I was at the theatre saw Chevallier in the next box to me de Crillon in the opposite one. Several significant looks passed between them, which convinced me that they were not unknown to each other; had I known at the time that *de Crillon* had purchased the schooner, I should have made it my business to trace their connection; for de Crillon's appearance I should believe him a villain. I never before felt so

great an anxiety to be at sea, the winds have been adverse for some days. We have just drop'd down to the Hook, and the first slant we shall go out. I hope the contest may depend on Commodore Bainbridge and myself; the Congress will join us, but I hope not, before we meet the British ships. The Belvidere is a large 36, the Essex only a small 32; but so help me God! I would not wish another gun, although I wish those I have were better. I know not how the contest may result; but this I know, that I never can survive the disgrace of striking the colors of the Essex.

God bless you, D. PORTER.

In another letter from the Essex to Samuel Hambleton Esq., dated Oct. 4th, 1812, he says:

Chester, Oct. 4th, 1812.

Dear Hambleton: I arrived yesterday from the capes, saw nothing. The neglect of the Department is unpardonable. Three days after my arrival I would have sailed with three months provisions I have yet received no orders. Tis strange! My next cruise I hope will be more profitable, if they give me any discretion, I shall expect to make my fortune. I still hope that they will let me carry into execution the plan that *once* gave so much pleasure to the Secry. If the govt buy the Alert, my part will net me 6 or $7,000, perhaps more. Comre D. has an agent at your port. I shall however mention you to my friends. If we do not get out soon we shall all be kept in until winter, as the British force has been so much augmented. There must be a change in our Department, or we never can expect to do any thing except on our own responsibility; there is no energy, nor will there be while a pint of whiskey can be purchased in the District of Columbia,—it is shameful. Why should the indisposition of R. —— paralize the operations of the navy. It is the duty of every one to be at his post such times as these.

God bless you, D. PORTER.

Samuel Hambleton Esq., U. S. Navy,
Newport, R. I.

In those days the rapidity in fitting out a ship of war depended very much upon the energy of the commanding officer, who had almost the entire charge of the work. Captain Porter worked day and night endeavoring to get his vessel ready to sail with the little squadron ordered to assemble at New York under Commodore Rodgers, but he found it out of the question to do so. When he received orders to get his ship ready, she was stripped of her rig-

ging, the hold was broken out, and she had to be hove down to make some necessary repairs, all of which as a seaman knows requires time to accomplish. However, so great were the captain's exertions and so ably was he seconded by his subordinates, that although the Essex was stripped nearly to a girtline when Commodore Rodgers put to sea on the 21st of July, yet on the 3d of August she sailed properly fitted, with a good crew, and a fine set of officers. Porter was now a captain, having been promoted to that grade on the 2d July, 1812. At that time, the Essex carried a very inferior battery for a vessel of her class; her original gun deck armament consisted of 26 long 12 pounders; but, contrary to the opinion of experienced officers, it had been changed some time previous to the declaration of war, and with the exception of six of her old twelve pounders, she now mounted 32 pound carronades in their places. Captain Porter was himself satisfied of the impropriety of placing so many of these short 32 pounder carronades on board our ships (as can be verified from his letters), and strongly protested against taking them to sea, asking for the old battery of 12 pounders. The department, however, declined to grant his request; a matter which in the end they had cause to regret. Captain Porter, after leaving New York, stood to the southward and captured several prizes, taking out the prisoners and destroying their vessels. His object was not so much prize money as glory, and wishing to have the honor of being the first to lower the British flag, he did not desire to weaken his crew. He found the Essex a good sailer, and in fact the only real objection to her was the number of carronades mounted in place of long guns; but he consoled himself with the speed of his ship, hoping that if he could get alongside a vessel of even superior force, his heavy shot might give him the victory.

Standing again to the northward, he fell in one night with a small fleet, which he soon ascertained were enemies. The English vessels were running northward before the wind, while the Essex was standing across their track on an easy bowline. The night was hazy though the moon was out, and it was just the time for a single vessel to watch a squadron without being discovered herself. Un-

fortunately, as daylight was fast approaching, there was little time for active operations. As the Essex drew near she found the vessels to be a convoy sailing in irregular order a considerable distance apart, while a large ship having charge of the convoy was some distance ahead. Captain Porter determined to keep the weather gage, until he could ascertain the force of the enemy, and stretched in towards the sternmost vessel which he spoke. He had gone to quarters but kept the ports in, ready to be knocked out at a moment's notice. Some strategy was necessary to obtain the required information, but by adroit questioning it was ascertained that the convoy consisted of transports in charge of a frigate and bomb vessel. Whereupon the captain having found out all he desired to learn, determined if possible to get alongside the frigate and carry her by surprise. So the Essex shot ahead, and soon came up with another transport; where some further conversation was carried on, but the Englishman suspecting that the stranger was an interloper announced his intention to signal the frigate. The Essex then threw off all disguise and ordered the transport to haul out of the convoy under penalty of being fired into, and the vessel was taken possession of as a prize. She was filled with soldiers, and so much time was consumed in securing them that day dawned and the attempt on the frigate was abandoned. The ship of war was the Minerva 36; the troops in the convoy amounted to 1000 men, of whom 150 were captured by the Essex.

A few days after this affair the Essex made a strange sail to windward. At this time the frigate was disguised as a merchantman, her gundeck ports being closed, her top gallant masts housed, and her sails set and trimmed in careless fashion. The stranger, deceived by the merchant like appearance of the American vessel, ran down directly for her, when the frigate kept off and showed American colors. The Essex was a small frigate lightly sparred, and with her ports in did not look like a ship of war; but, whatever may have been the Englishman's opinion, he set his colors at the peak and opened fire. The Essex now lowered her gun deck ports, and returned the compliment, with such effect, that after one or two discharges the enemy's

crew deserted their guns and ran below; and in eight minutes after the American opened fire, the Englishman struck his colors. Lieut. Finch was sent to take possession of the prize, which proved to be H. B. M. sloop of war Alert, Capt. Langhorne, mounting twenty eighteen pounder carronades, and with a full crew. Seven feet of water was found in the ship's hold, and she was obliged to wear round to keep from sinking. Although ignorant of the fact at the time, Capt. Porter was much gratified when he afterwards learned that the Alert was the first English ship of war to fall into our possession; he was, however, disappointed that the vessel was not more worthy of his metal. The Americans were astonished at the feeble resistance made by the Alert, for although in number and weight of guns the Essex was nearly double her strength, yet the latter's work was done so quickly, as to afford no comparison whatever with regard to the efficiency of the two vessels. The English had formed such an overweening opinion of their own prowess on the ocean, that the Americans expected some stronger proof of it on this occasion. In fact the Alert was either taken by surprise, or her captain supposed that the American ship would strike at the sight of the British flag; and receiving such a rapid fire, the sailors found that they had been led into a trap, and deserted their guns in a panic, with but three men wounded. The British captain may have been a fearless man, but must have lacked judgment, to run thus suddenly into the jaws of a frigate. It is more than likely, however, that the English had acquired such a habit of dashing at French ships twice their size, as to fancy such tactics would answer with the Americans; forgetting that we were from British stock, with an infusion of youthful vigor which the Frenchmen had not. It was, in fact, like a struggle between a youthful athlete and an old fogy, the latter very plethoric, very opinionated, and not by any means so "active on his pins." The Essex had now, with the crew of the Alert, three hundred prisoners on board, more than could well be taken care of. For many reasons it was desirable to get rid of them, and Captain Porter accordingly entered into an agreement with Capt. Langhorne, by which the

Alert was converted into a cartel and sent to St. Johns, N. F., thus getting rid of the prisoners and ensuring the arrival of the prize at an American port afterwards. Admiral Sir J. T. Duckworth, the commander in chief of H. B. Majesty's naval forces at Newfoundland, considering this rather sharp practice on the part of the Americans, protested against it as injurious to the British interests, although he honorably complied with the conditions entered into by his subordinate. The Alert's guns were thrown overboard, and she was put in charge of Lieut. Wilmer, with orders to proceed as a cartel to St. John's, Newfoundland. The following correspondence on the subject is highly honorable to all parties concerned, as showing their desire to mitigate the horrors of war. The objections of Admiral Sir J. T. Duckworth, as to the impropriety of turning captured ships into cartels, seem to be well founded, but he exhibits a magnanimity in keeping with the high reputation of this distinguished officer.

Sir J. T. Duckworth to Captain Porter.

St. John's, Newfoundland, Aug. 5, 1812.

Sir: Your letter of the 2d inst. was delivered to me yesterday by Mr. McKnight, midshipman of the United States Frigate Essex under your command. I am sensible of the good disposition you have evinced to alleviate the distresses of war, and would have gladly embraced your proposal for an exchange of the prisoners, that we have respectively made, but I am sorry to say that at the present moment and under the peculiar circumstances of the case, it is not in my power to do so. In the first place, I have not yet received those instructions from my government which I considered necessary for the guidance of my conduct in respect to any such arrangement; and in the next, the officer whom you charged with the British prisoners has only delivered to me a list of their names, without producing any of their persons acquainting me that they had taken the vessel from him and put into another port of this island. I can only, therefore, assure you, that I shall report the matter fully to his majesty's government, transmitting a copy of your letter and of the list of British prisoners by which it is accompanied. I have had the pleasure of forwarding to Halifax the young gentleman whom you sent to me, an opportunity having already occurred; and I have written to the commander-in-chief in that station requesting that he will endeavor to provide the means of his conveyance to the United States.

I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,
J. T. DUCKWORTH.

To Captain Porter,
Commander of the United States Frigate the Essex.

Sir J. T. Duckworth to the Honorable Secretary
of the Navy of the United States.
St. Johns, Newfoundland, August 31, 1812.

A vessel captured as the Alert has been, could not have been vested with the character of a cartel, until she had entered a port of the nation by which she had been captured and been regularly fitted out from thence. For every prize might otherwise be provided with a flag of truce and proposals for an exchange of prisoners, and rendered thus effectually secure against the possibility of re-capture; while the cruising ship would be able to keep at sea with an undiminished crew; the cartels being always navigable by the prisoners of war. Nevertheless I am willing to give proof at once of my respect for the liberality with which the captain of the Essex has acted in more than one instance, towards the British subjects who have fallen into his hands; of the sacred obligation that is always felt to fulfil the engagements of a British officer; and of my confidence in the disposition of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, to allay the violence of war by encouraging a reciprocation of that courtesy by which its pressure upon individuals may be so essentially diminished.

On the 4th of this month a midshipman of the Essex arrived and presented to me a letter from his captain proposing an exchange for eighty-six British prisoners. The midshipman had however, been placed alone in the charge of one of the captured vessels with 86 prisoners to conduct them to this port. A list of forty prisoners of the same description, disposed of in the same manner has been sent to me by the commander of the American private armed schooner the Rossie.

It is incumbent upon me to protest in the strongest manner against the practice of conducting exchanges upon terms like these; and to signify to you that it will be utterly impossible for me to incur in future, the responsibility of assenting to them.

The Essex, now unhampered by prisoners or prizes, continued her cruise; once she was chased by two British frigates, but made her escape when night set in. On this occasion Captain Porter determined to try and capture one

of them by a *ruse*, and for this purpose after losing sight of the enemy in the darkness, he tacked ship, extinguished all lights, and kept a good look out. It was his intention, if he could get alongside one of the ships, to fire a broadside and then board. The stream anchor and cable was to be triced up to the main yard to be dropped on the enemy's deck, and various other devices were arranged to promote success; but, notwithstanding all efforts to fall in with the enemy, he could not be found, for after losing sight of the American ship in the darkness he had probably tacked and joined his consort. However, it was probably quite as well that the Essex did not fall in with the frigate, for the contest might have been disastrous to the former. British frigates do not let strange ships approach them at night without being in readiness for battle, and as the Essex was much lighter than any frigate the British had at the time on the North American station, it is more than probable she would have been overmatched by the two. Thus far the cruise had been less profitable than those on board the Essex had hoped, though gratifying from the fact that they had captured the first ship of war belonging to the British; and now, finding his stores running short, Capt. Porter shaped his course for the capes of the Delaware, arrived on the 7th, and in the middle of September anchored off the town of Chester, where his family resided; here he watered ship and laid in a store of fresh provisions. The following letter is of interest in this connection:

Essex, Mouth of Delaware, Sept. 7, 1815.

Dear Hambleton: I have at length arrived safe and sound. Accompanying this you will receive a power to act as prize agent for the Essex. I was at a loss to know what place would suit you but understand you was to be stationed at Rhode Island. I do not know if my prizes have got in safe. I have taken one sloop of war and one transport, burnt two merchantmen, liberated one and sent in four. My prisoners amount to four hundred and twenty, and I calculate I have injured the enemy $300,000. My next cruise I hope will prove more profitable to self and agents. God bless you, write me soon and give me all the news.

Yours, D. P.

Samuel Hambleton, Esq., U. S. Navy.

The few days he remained in Chester were given up to social enjoyment with his family, while his first lieutenant, Mr. John Downes, prepared the ship for sea. At this time Capt. Porter conceived the idea of that eventful cruise in the Pacific ocean, where the destruction of British commerce by the Essex did so much towards putting an end to the war. Porter was, therefore, excusable in taking a few days' rest with his family before entering upon a cruise which he knew would keep him from home at least two years, and not unlikely for ever. Captain Porter had received orders to form with his vessel a part of the squadron of Commodore Bainbridge, consisting of the Constitution, Essex and Hornet, and to rendezvous at Porto Praya, in the Cape Verd islands, or failing to find the other vessels at that point, to proceed to Fernando Noronha, off the coast of Brazil, there to await instructions. It was originally intended that Commodore Bainbridge should proceed with his little squadron to the Pacific and destroy the British whale fishery in that quarter, but circumstances preventing, it remained for Porter to carry out a policy disastrous to the enemy's commerce. It was a heartrending occasion when he was obliged to separate from his young wife and children, but with him duty was a stronger feeling than the love of home, especially when the honor of his country was at stake. So bidding his friends a cheerful farewell, and promising to return with a frigate in tow, he repaired on board his ship and set sail from the Delaware on the 28th of October, 1812.

The following letters, written to his friend Samuel Hambleton, at that time, are interesting from the fact that they were written in the most confidential style, to a friend in whom he could certainly rely. They exhibit a pretty correct state of affairs, and the feelings of the day, and help to make up the history of that period. Samuel Hambleton was the constant correspondent of Capt. Porter, from the year 1808, until the year of his death. The Captain made Hambleton's acquaintance when he commanded at New Orleans, Hambleton being at the time purser of the station; the Captain soon formed a high estimate of Hambleton's character, and they became intimate friends, an intimacy that lasted without interruption through their

lives. Hambleton was one of those genial spirits one meets but rarely. He was a Marylander, of one of the best families, and full of that kind hospitality which always distinguished the citizens of that state; he was a great admirer of Capt. Porter, and preserved every scrap of paper he ever received from the latter. At the death of Hambleton all these letters were placed in the hands of the author, who may consider them of more interest, perhaps, than will the reader.

Dear Hambleton: I wrote you a day or two ago by Lieut Neal, and presume this will reach you the first. I have no news to give you, but am looking out with much anxiety for letters from you. I perceive death to our hopes of an increase of the navy — the govt seems disposed to yield the principle they have so long held out, that the ocean is the high road of nations and are determined to retort their aggressions in Canada — it is the safest, but not the most noble and dignified manner of retaliating. We can reach her with certainty there, but this is not the only point where she is vulnerable, her extensive and badly protected convoys in every part of the ocean, are equally open to our attacks. If we lose a few of our frigates what will she gain by it! and what will be our losses compared with the millions we should sink, burn and destroy! I detest the idea of trusting to our privateers for the destruction of British commerce — are we to become a nation of buccaneers, a nest of villains, a detestible set of pirates? When a general system of piracy is countenanced by our govt, when the whole maritime defence of a nation consists of buccaneers, farewell national honor, farewell national pride! then we sink to the level of the bashaw of Tripoli, and the emperor of Hayti.

It is said we are to go to New York as soon as the ice breaks up, there is a report that the Guerriere and Tartarus are on the coast. Give me all the news you can rake and scrape.

Yours sincerely, D. PORTER.

Feb. 7th, 1812.

Samuel Hambleton: P.S. It seems that Shaw, Smith and Dent, received the pay, and were authorized to wear the uniform of captains, when at the head of the list of master comdts. The death of Nicholson places me there, and I claim the right to the same priviledge and distinction. I have written the secy on the subject, they have thought proper not to notice my claim. I have written again

persisting in my demand for permission to appear as a captain, if the above mentioned were authorized by the Dep[t] to appear as such when in my situation. If their dress was assumed, I shall not assume it, but I wish to know, and will know the fact. If they were authorized, I will have the same authority. The suspension of Barron should give me the pay of captain and with it the uniform. Let me know if you hear any thing said on the subject.

Essex, Feb. 28th, 1812.

Dear Hambleton: The die is cast. I have passed the Rubicon, my letter to the secretary (a copy of which I forwarded you) was sent before I received your friendly letter of advice or I should have suppressed it. As I have commenced, I shall persevere; it is noble to struggle against the gods, unsaying is like paying back, "double trouble." If they want *me* to unsay, let *them* have the politeness to explain. The secretary is unpopular here with the cloth, from the *highest* to the lowest, he is disliked; it is supposed he has been too long in the habit of driving slaves to know how to regard the honorable feelings of gentlemen, added to this a propensity to "toss the little finger," it is believed disqualifies him for the station. You know best how true the suspicions are — there are great discontents and even disgusts here — at conduct and treatment from the department; for *my own part* I drive on the good old way, do my duty and "in fact" intend that no one shall "treat me badly with impunity."

I wish really that congress would scrutinize into the expenditure of monies appropriated for the navy; for, until this is done, we can not have a navy; 5 expensive navy yards, for the repairs and supplies of 5 frigates, 3 corvettes, and 5 brigs and schooners is shameful; it is equally shameful to have such a superabundance of officers on full and half pay. Rotten gun boats, rotten hulks, sinecures, waste and embezzlement swallow up all the appropriation; not one million is spent on our ships, and yet we have the credit of squandering the whole! One navy yard is enough for us, why not sell the rest? why not turn out a number of vagabonds that are useless to the service. Burn the wretched gun boats, and build some more useful vessels; with 50 frigates Great Britain dare not show her nose in our seas. If things stand thus, we shall have warm work on our coast next summer, we are sharpening all our swords and preparing for the worst that may happen, we must "die all, die nobly."

I am sorry D. has committed himself so far with the agent. I always feared that his money making schemes would involve him in difficulty. A Commander should not put himself in the power of

any subordinate to him. The agent (he might have sworn, if he had only half an idea) would not have kept his secret any longer than suited his interest. If I should ever feel disposed to be dishonest he should be the last man I would inform of it; unless I intended to give him an equal interest in my infamy, perhaps I am wrong in my suspicions of the man, if so, God forgive me. We will see if the "veteran who can not be led astray" will have the interest of his country more at heart than his "crazy predecessor," and we will calculate at our leisure the "thousands and tens of thousands" saved by this *second Solomon.*

God bless you,

Your friend, D. PORTER.

Saml. Hambleton, Esq., of the U. S. Navy, Washington.

Hampton Roads, April 29th, 1812.

Dear Hambleton: We have just arrived, without having any fight, you may therefore conclude we have not many broken bones. We shape our course to the south, where we have heard of the Guerriere and Shannon; the Congress joins us, she is ready, I believe, and with this force I think we have not much to fear from anything we shall meet on our coast; this augmentation, however, takes from me the chance of getting "Gilded spurs." I shall calculate on finding a letter from you at Norfolk; direct your next to Chester, where I hope to be in two or three weeks from this date. I am ignorant of what is going on in the world, and therefore have no news to give you, from you I expect a great deal as usual. Our ships are in fine order, our crews are good; we have great confidence in our *Chef d'escadron* Bainbridge, and I think that the honor of our flag will not be tarnished by us. I have not seen Smith; he is up at town. I am told he is pretty well, but rather deaf. God bless you and believe me,

Affectionately yours, D. PORTER.

S. Hambleton Esq., of the Navy, Washington.

Chester, Oct. 19th, 1812.

Dear Hambleton: In two or three days I sail on a long, a *very long* cruise; *our* destination and intended movements I am not at liberty to divulge, perhaps a more important cruise was never undertaken by the *vessels* of any nation, and I have vanity to believe that *my plan for the "first campaign" produced it* — it may be many months before you hear of my arrival in the U. S., and if you hear of me at all, I hope the accounts may not be unfavorable. The winter season will suit for sending vessels with prospects of their

safe arrival in Newport, and to that place it is not improbable they will be ordered.

I am in hopes of hearing from you once more before my departure. I have no news to give you, and offer my best wishes for your welfare and happiness I join Bainbridge.

God bless you,
D. PORTER.

The following are the names of the British vessels captured by the Essex, Captain Porter, from the 3d July, 1812, up to August 13th, 1812:

Brig. Transport, No. 299. Brig. Lamprey. Brig. Leander. Brig. Hero. Ship, Nancy. Brig. Brothers. Brig. King George. Brig. Mary. Ship Alert, 20 guns.

CHAPTER VII.

UP to the present time we have been able to give but a cursory view of Captain Porter's life, the limits of our biography not admitting of minute details, but the following account of his proceedings during the memorable cruise of the Essex demand, and will receive more attention. The events of this cruise were so remarkable that Porter's narrative, published shortly after his return to the United States, was read by thousands with as much interest as one of Cooper's novels.

In the early part of this century, the Pacific ocean was comparatively little known to the world at large. Our adventurous whalemen and fur traders published very few accounts of their voyages, while the explorations of Cook, LaPeyrouse, Vancouver and others, though admirably given to the world, were expensive works, in those days not accessible to any but a limited number of readers. The narrative of the cruise of the Essex, written by Cap-

tain Porter and published in a popular form, was universally read, and was several times republished. It is long since out of print, and we make no apology for extracting largely from its pages, as while it bears the authority of an official report it abounds in interesting information and striking incident. The Essex was provided with everything necessary for a long cruise, including a new set of sails and new standing rigging, and great pains had been taken to fit her for service. As much provision as could be stowed was received on board with plenty of vegetables and lime juice as anti-scorbutics, and the sailors were provided with a double supply of clothing. The officers and crew were aware of the probable length of the cruise, and having recently received an installment of prize money had provided themselves with everything necessary.

While Captain Porter had a great regard for the appearance of his vessel, he had a greater care for the happiness of those under his command; and to this very necessary attribute of an officer was due his strong hold on the affections of his crew. No reasonable officer or seaman will object to discipline, however strict, provided his commander does his duty, sharing their discomforts when necessity requires, and contributing to their welfare when opportunity will allow. Porter's severity was ever tempered by humanity, for he would not punish a man without investigating the circumstances of his case, and always pardoned offenders if there were any mitigating circumstances which seemed to justify it, or if any officer would go security for their future good behaviour. It is not probable that the millenium will ever arrive on board a vessel of war, for amid the great diversity of characters that are always congregated in such a place, some are sure to be found apparently destitute of moral sense and inaccessible to moral suasion. There were certain offenses that could not go unpunished and in olden times the *cat* and the *colt* were familiar animals, prowling about the gangway in search of their prey, but from the affection his sailors always showed for him, and the ready manner in which they stood by him, it may be reasonably supposed that Porter resorted to corporeal punishment as seldom as possible. He considered the cat-o'nine-tails (though au-

thorized by law as the most proper punishment for sailors), as a relic of barbarism which should not have been adopted in our service. It was necessary, perhaps, in the British navy, in which was so large a proportion of desperate characters and men torn from their homes by ruthless press gangs, who required the most summary and severe punishment to keep them in subjection. This disgraceful method of punishment has disappeared both from our own and from the British navy, and the latter service, as if to make amends for the injustice so long dealt out to seamen, have taken the lead of us in contributing to their welfare. The same feelings that animate officers now to care for those who fight the guns and manage the sails in storm or calm, influenced Captain Porter in 1812, and hasty and impulsive though he was, few men have been more affectionately regarded by their officers and sailors.

I deem it a duty to the memory of the gallant officers of the Essex (for I presume not one of them is now living), to insert a list of their names; their descendants will be pleased to see them remembered and to know with what grateful kindness they were spoken of by their old commander to the latest hour of his life.

List of Officers of the U. S. S. Essex.

David Porter,	Captain.
John Downes,	1st Lieut.
James P. Wilmer,	2d Lieut.
James Wilson,	3d Lieut.
William Finch,	actg. 4th Lieut.
Stephen D. McKnight,	actg. 5th Lieut.
John G. Cowell,	Sailing Master.
Robert Miller,	Surgeon.
David P. Adams,	Chaplain.
John R. Shaw,	Purser.
William H. Haddiway,	Midshipman.
David G. Farragut,	do
Richard Dashiell,	do
John S. Cowan,	do
Charles T. Clark,	do
William H. Odenheimer,	do

Henry W. Ogden,	Midshipman.
Henry Gray,	do
George W. Isaacs,	do
William W. Feltus,	do
Thomas A. Conover,	do
David Tittermary,	do
Richard K. Hoffman,	Acting Sur. Mate.
Alexr. M. Montgomery,	do
Edward Linscott,	Boatswain.
Lawrence Miller,	Gunner.
David Navarro,	Sailmaker.
W. W. Bostwick,	Capt's Clerk.
Wm. P. Pierce,	Master's Mate.
James Terry,	do

Just after leaving the capes of the Delaware the Essex encountered a gale, and being very deep she labored so heavily as to open her waterways and a great deal of the provisions were destroyed; but by taking proper precautions the leak did not increase. Having in view the length of the cruise the crew were now put on an allowance sufficient for their comfort, to which they cheerfully acquiesced, particularly as there was no diminution in the quantity of grog served out. The first thing the captain did, after the gale had abated, was to grant a pardon for all offenses that had been committed on board, recommending strict conformity with discipline for the future, and holding out a prospect of reward to all those who were faithful in the discharge of duty. He expressed a hope that punishment during the cruise would be unnecessary, but cautioned the vicious not to depend on his forbearance.

So great was his care to preserve the health of the crew, that he gave Lieut. Finch charge of the berth deck, to see that all his sanitary regulations were carried out; an unusual degree of care on board a ship of war, where this duty is generally entrusted to mates of decks. Captain Porter made arrangements for keeping the men constantly and usefully employed during working hours, allowing them the time between 4 and 6 P. M. to amuse themselves, when the whole ship was a scene of noisy merriment. Altogether the captain pursued a course well adapted to make

men contented and happy; and his example, in this respect, is worthy to be followed by future commanders.

The Essex shaped her course to strike 36° 7′ north latitude 58°, 54′ west longitude, whence she steered south east hoping to cross the track of vessels bound from England to the Bermudas, and those from the West Indies to Europe. On the 8th of Nov., the Essex gave chase to a stranger, of whom she afterwards lost sight in a squall, which vessel was supposed to be the U. S. sloop of war Wasp. Between the 8th and the 22d several vessels were overhauled and spoken, but none proved to be prizes, much to the disappointment of the officers and crew.

On the morning of the 27th the Essex stood into the harbor of Porto Praya in the Cape Verd islands, one of the ports appointed by Commodore Bainbridge as a place of rendezvous. Lieut. Downes was sent on shore to communicate with the authorities; the ship, meanwhile, lying off and on with the American flag at the peak. In that enervating climate they have a comfortable custom of going to sleep in the middle of the day, so when Lieut. Downes arrived at the governor's house he was politely informed that his excellency could not be disturbed, but the deputy stated that he would guaranty the return of salutes and any other civilities that Capt. Porter might offer. The Essex, therefore, remained five days at Porto Praya, where the officers and crew were treated with great kindness. The governor and family came on board and were received with all the honors. His excellency had from the first shown himself partial to the Americans, which was rather strange, as Portugal had at the time a treaty of alliance with England and none with us. The fondness for Americans was explained by the fact that the islanders had a considerable trade with our merchantmen, while the only British vessels that visited them were ships of war, whose officers, by their haughty bearing, rather disgusted their Portuguese allies. Nothing was heard of Commodore Bainbridge, and the governor having graciously informed the captain that he was at liberty to depart, a white flag was hoisted on the fort to intimate the fact to the world at large. This amused the Americans very much, as the fort was a ricketty affair that the Essex could have demolished

in half an hour; but these old conservatives had an idea that Portugal was one of the great powers of the earth, and that everybody must conform to her customs. The Americans did not stop to make a point with his excellency, but thanking him warmly for his kindness, sailed away from Porto Praya, the best feeling existing on both sides.

To show the harmony which existed between Capt. Porter and his crew, we will mention that he allowed the sailors to lay in all sorts of stores at Porto Praya, and among other things a quantity of pigs, and kids, which were very numerous at the islands and very cheap. The ship was literally crowded with these beasts of the field. Imagine the horror of the average naval martinet under such circumstances, a man who thinks only of holy stones and bright work, and to whom the comfort of the sailor is the last consideration. A single pig in the eyes of such a man would desecrate the whole ship, and kids (unless they were the white kids worn upon his dainty hands) would set him crazy. However, Captain Porter was obliged to curtail this indulgence of his crew in livestock, for the animals drank so much water that an edict was issued condemning them all to the knife. Many a petition was sent in from the sailors to save from destruction a favorite animal destined, perhaps, for a Christmas dinner, with assurances from the owner that they should be supplied from their own allowance, which was but half a gallon a day for each man; but the fiat had gone forth and none of the numerous pigs, and kids, could be permitted to live without the appearance of partiality. The crew good humoredly acquiesced in the captain's decision, but one or two old salts (who had devoted much time to teaching their favorite pigs the accomplishment of grog drinking) could not help expressing their regret at the loss of the rum thus expended. Many little hints might be taken from the management of ships' crews sixty years ago that would greatly benefit the service of to-day, by strengthening the bonds of good feeling which should exist between officers and crew; and as I proceed in my narrative I shall endeavor to indicate some of these particulars in the hope that the naval service may be benefitted thereby. Nothing

so militates against the health of a ship's company as imperfect ventilation, and strange to say very little trouble is taken to guard against it. Even in this day of "modern improvements" it is the custom to crowd men at night on a ship's berth deck with only seventeen inches space between the hammock hooks. How shocking to sling up three or four hundred men in hammocks on a frigate's berth deck with only about eleven square feet for each person in which to sleep, and inhale the foul odors engendered by such close packing on a deck six feet high, receiving air through two hatchways only, each eight feet square! How miserable must a man feel who has slept all night in a bag with his face but seventeen inches from that of his next neighbor, the whole atmosphere polluted because the men exhaust more air than is supplied to them. Any one would suppose that such things would be looked after by every commander, and proper hygienic regulations would be established on board, to maintain the efficiency of the ship's company; but in the early days of the navy, when it was struggling for existence without organization, such matters were left wholly to the consideration of the individual commanding officers; and it was only such of these as possessed the proper attributes, who gave the subject much attention. We remember once seeing a patent pump placed on board a frigate, for the purpose of freeing the hold from foul air. It was faithfully used morning and evening till late in the cruise; circumstances requiring it to be overhauled, it was found never to have been supplied with the necessary buckets to ensure its answering the purpose intended. This same captain required most of his crew to sleep on the berth deck, giving as a reason that it left the guns unincumbered. Now Captain Porter gave his close attention to all these matters, placing the men stationed at the gun deck battery to sleep on the gun deck, in the vicinity of their guns. Part of the gun deck ports were left out at night and the result was that the men, instead of being weakened and depressed by a night's unrest, were refreshed and invigorated by a good night's sleep. So when the Essex arrived at Porto Praya only three men were on the sick list, a remarkably small number for that day! when the food and water were not so good as at present.

HOPE

After leaving Porto Praya the course was shaped for the island of Fernando Noronha, off Cape St. Roque off the coast of Brazil. During the whole voyage Capt. Porter took great pains to keep meteorological tables, and made numerous observations for the benefit of future navigators, but to these we can only allude in passing.

On the 11th of December, 1812, the Essex crossed the equator in 30° W. longitude, and next day a sail was discovered to windward, having the appearance of a British brig of war. Chase was immediately given, and at 6 P.M., the stranger displayed a signal. With a view of decoying her, Capt. Porter showed such British signals as he had become possessed of during the last cruise, but without avail. At sunset the vessel hoisted British colors, and after dark made her night signals. At nine o'clock the Essex was within musket shot, and wishing to injure the enemy as little as possible Capt. Porter ordered the great guns not to be fired. He then hailed the stranger, and directed her to heave to; but, as the order was not complied with, and as the enemy was evidently trying to secure a position in order to rake the Essex, and so escape in the confusion, a volley of musketry was poured into her, killing one of her crew, whereupon the brig surrendered. She proved to be H. B. M. packet Nocton, mounting ten guns, and with a crew of forty men. Specie amounting to $55,000 was found on board, and removed to the Essex. Lieut. Finch was placed in command of the prize, and directed to proceed to the United States. Seventeen of the Nocton's crew were sent in her, and a corresponding number of the Essex's men. The captain, sailing master, and all the passengers of the packet, were also placed on board, after giving their paroles, with the privilege of embarking in any vessel they might fall in with bound to Europe.

Captain Porter always treated his prisoners with great consideration, never permitting any one to maltreat or plunder them, and the officers and passengers of the Nocton seemed to consider their trip to America more in the light of an agreeable adventure than a misfortune; yet, notwithstanding his invariable humanity, the British reviewers, on the publication of *Porter's Journal*, character-

ized his acts as a "series of unprovoked aggressions, extortion and cruelty which converted disgust into horror," and a great deal more of the same kind of abuse, in which the name of this gallant officer was associated with those of the most sanguinary pirates.

There was, on board the Nocton, a British merchant from Brazil; on leaving the Essex he presented the Captain with two letters, one to his firm in Rio, requesting them in case Captain Porter put in there to show him every courtesy for his very generous and humane conduct to him while a prisoner. The other to his brother, in which he says, "we have been most humanely treated. I cannot inform you more particularly, having given my word of honor not to disclose anything relative to our capture. I am well and in good spirits, and request you will make yourself easy respecting me."

As the Nocton was a fine vessel, Captain Porter, in his letter to the secretary of the navy, recommended that she be taken into the navy to supply the place of the Nautilus, captured by the British a short time before.

On the 14th December, 1812, the island of Fernando Noronha was discovered, and next morning Lieut. Downes went on shore in plain clothes, with directions to inform the governor that the ship was the Fanny of London, Captain Johnson, bound to Rio Janeiro, sixty days out, and in want of refreshments. That the ship could not anchor, having lost all her ground tackle, &c., &c. In two hours Mr. Downes returned with the information that H. B. M. ships Acosta 44, and Morgiana 20, had sailed from the island within a week, leaving a letter for Sir James Yeo to be sent to England the first opportunity. Word was immediately dispatched to the governor that the captain of the Fanny knew Sir James very well, that he was going direct to England from Brazil and would take charge of the letter and deliver it in person. The letter was accordingly sent on board. On opening the document it was found to be, as had been surmised, from Commodore Bainbridge and read as follows:

My Dear Mediterranean Friend: Probably you may stop here, don't attempt to water it is attended with too many difficulties. I

learned before I left *England* that you were bound to Brazil coast, if so perhaps we may meet at St. Salvadore, or at Rio Janeiro. I should be happy to meet and converse on our old affairs of captivity. Recollect our secret in these times.

Your friend of H. M. ship Acosta Kerr, Sir James Yeo of H. B. M. ship Southampton.

The following was written with sympathetic ink.

"I am bound off St. Salvadore, thence off Cape Frio, where I intend to cruise until the 1st of January. Go off Cape Frio to the northward of Rio and keep a look out for me.

Your friend &c."

This letter gave Captain Porter all the information he wanted, and hoisting his boat he immediately sailed to the southward.

On the 20th of Dec. 1812, the Essex fell in with a Portuguese brig, the master of which informed him that an English sloop of war, laden with specie, had put into St. Salvadore in distress, about three weeks before. It was supposed that this vessel must be the Bonne Citoyenne, afterwards blockaded by the Hornet, of which vessel intelligence had been received from the Nocton. The temptation to go in search of such a prize was great, but thinking it not unlikely that the commodore would fall in with the Bonne Citoyenne on his arrival off St. Salvadore, Capt. Porter thought it best to proceed at once to Cape Frio in obedience to the hint given him in the letter received at Fernando Naronha.

On the 29th, what with chasing strange vessels and drifting, our voyagers found themselves within five leagues of the harbor of Rio de Janeiro, when the lookout at the mast head descried a sail to windward standing out of that port. Chase was immediately given, but it was not until 9 P.M. when the frigate came up with the stranger. She proved to be the British schooner Elizabeth from which they learned that a number of British vessels had sailed the night previous from Rio Janeiro under convoy of the three masted schooner Juniper, consisting of the Elizabeth, four ships and a cutter, the ships represented as deeply loaded and dull sailors. The prisoners were taken

out of the Elizabeth and a prize crew under Midshipman Clark put on board; and the officer was directed to proceed to the United States, or to Rio de Janeiro as he thought proper. The Essex then followed in the direction the convoy was steering, carrying as much sail as was thought prudent so as not to endanger the masts; but, next morning, it was discovered that the maintopmast trussel trees were carried away, and it was expected that the top mast rigging and top gallant mast would come tumbling down, but the damage was temporarily repaired by lashing the heel of the top gallant mast, and taking the strain off the cross trees, and sail was pressed on again.

It was the evident desire of the master of the Elizabeth, who remained in the Essex, to deceive Capt. Porter and deter him from going to San Salvadore, which made the latter believe that the convoy was bound to meet the Bonne Citoyenne; and that the Juniper was only to remain in charge of the convey until the junction with the larger vessel was effected. Several disappointments occurred during this chase, clouds being taken for sails as frequently happens in those latitudes where they rise slowly from the horizon like a vessel just heaving in sight. So great is the illusion that the navigator is frequently deceived into seeing the different sails set or furled one after another.

Capt. Porter had undoubted information, that as yet, only three British ships of war were in these waters, viz: the Montagu, 74, at Rio; the Nereus, 32, at the River la Plate; and the Bonne Citoyenne at St. Salvadore; so he resolved to proceed to the latter place in the hope of intercepting the convoy, or failing in that, to join the Constitution and Hornet which he was informed were blockading the Bonne Citoyenne.

The Essex having boarded a Portuguese brig, under British colors, Capt. Porter sent word by the master to the British admiral that he was his majesty's frigate Hyperion, seven weeks from England, bound to Rio, but hearing that a large American privateer was off the coast he intended to cruise for her, a few days, before going into port. His motive in giving this information was to keep the admiral in port where he was lying, when the Elizabeth was cap-

tured. Porter felt sure that if he could join the Constitution and Hornet before the Montagu could get to San Salvavador, the three ships would be more than a match for the ships of the line. Fresh northerly winds prevailed, however, bringing with them a very heavy head sea. The wind increased to a gale, which racked the Essex, doing much injury to masts and rigging; and finding that the ship was not gaining anything to windward, and that there was no prospect of cutting off the convoy, Capt. Porter gave up further pursuit, and stood to the westward to get on the track of vessels bound to Rio. He now steered for St. Catharine's, that place being mentioned in his instructions as a place of rendezvous, and he knew that San Sebastian was an unlikely place to find Commodore Bainbridge, as it was so near Rio where a superior British force was lying. So far, the Essex had been unfortunate in not encountering British vessels, and although they gave chase to many sails, they almost all turned out to be Portuguese. The British merchantmen generally waited in port until they could sail with a convoy and in perfect security. All this time, and amid their disappointments, the health of the ship's company continued remarkably good. They had been confined to two-thirds allowance of salt provisions, and half allowance of bread without a murmur being heard; but the rum running short, it was found necessary to reduce proportionally, the allowance of liquor. When this was announced, every man in the ship refused to receive a drop of the precious nectar, unless they could have their full allowance; stating that when there was no more, they would cheerfully go without it, but as long as it lasted they wanted all they were entitled to. As there was, however, but a small quantity of spirits on board, and believing that a sudden deprivation of it would injure the health of the crew, Capt. Porter declined to accede to their wishes. He directed that the grog tub should be upset fifteen minutes after the crew were called to grog; the consequence was that every man rushed to the tub for fear of losing his allowance, and no further complaint was heard. The Captain thoroughly understood the character of sailors; he was particular in paying them their money, for stopped rations, at the end of each month, which enabled the men

to lay in supplies of fruits and vegetables, when occasion offered. Before reaching St. Catharine's the Captain divided among the men a large portion of the money captured on board the Nocton, at which they were much pleased; but this accession of funds gave rise to a system of gambling to which he soon put a stop, after lecturing them on the impropriety of such conduct.

On the 20th of January, 1813, the Essex anchored within two miles of the principal fortification at St. Catharine's, which stands on an island, about one hundred yards from the main land. Here the usual courtesies were passed with the authorities, after which Capt. Porter proceeded to lay in a stock of water and fresh provisions, which were with difficulty obtained. A few days after the Essex's arrival, a small Portuguese vessel came in and gave the Americans the information that an American corvette of 22 guns had come into Rio a few days before, a prize to the Montagu 74. She had been in company with a large frigate, and had been taken off Albrothas' shoal. The Portuguese captain also informed them that the day before he sailed from Rio, a British frigate and two brigs of war had arrived from England; that two American schooners had been captured and sent in there; and that a British 60 gun ship was shortly expected from the Cape of Good Hope. He also informed them that a British convoy and packet had been taken by the Americans, the latter containing a large amount of specie, and that an American frigate had sunk an English frigate.

Pleasing as was the intelligence of the capture of the convoy, Capt. Porter felt that his prospects of meeting Commodore Bainbridge were very small. He was satisfied that the American ship of war reported captured was the Hornet, and the report of an American frigate sinking an English vessel no doubt referred to the Constitution. If this latter report was true, Commodore Bainbridge would undoubtedly seek a port in the United States, as he would be badly cut up in an engagement of the kind reported. In fact the Java had been captured off San Salvador by the Constitution.

Porter lost no time in making up his mind what to do, his position was very precarious. Here was an American

frigate, cruising alone on a coast where British influence predominated, and where the American government, yet in its infancy, had not gained sufficient prestige to counteract it. As for any protection from the local authorities, when in their ports, it was not to be depended on. The United States had made no arrangements for establishing supply stations abroad, a circumstance that operated against us then, as it will in future wars, while Great Britain, always having a war on hand or in prospective, had made extensive arrangements in different parts of the world, to have her ships of war supplied with every thing needful. A few days would carry to Rio the news of the Essex's presence at St. Catharine's; and he feared that the English would not respect the neutrality of that port, a supposition in which he was doubtless correct; and being now thrown on his own resources, Capt. Porter determined to proceed around Cape Horn into the Pacific, where he could carry out the cherished scheme he had arranged (before leaving home) with Commodore Bainbridge.

To think with Porter was to act, and as soon as the above information reached him, he made signal "All hands repair on board; and that same night proceeded to sea, with the loss of one anchor and two of the men, who absented themselves from the boat. When a good offing had been made, the captain called upon the purser for an account of provisions, and found that there was but three months bread on board, at half allowance. There was no port on the coast where a supply could be had, without great risk of capture or blockade, which was quite as bad; and an attempt to return to the United States, at that season, with the coast swarming with British cruisers, would be equivalent to throwing the Essex into their hands. So he determined to run all risks, and trust to getting supplies on the coast of Chili.

The events of the cruise, around Cape Horn, would not particularly interest the general reader. It was a boisterous voyage, requiring all the skill of a thorough seaman to avoid the loss of sails and spars. Any one, reading Porter's daily journal, would be struck with the forethought he exhibited, on all occasions, in preparing for the difficulties that were constantly arising.

The Essex had now been absent three months from the United States, of which time, only seven days had been passed in port; and it can be imagined, that with the storms encountered, and the press of sail she had often to carry, that Porter and his officers must have paid great attention to keeping the ship in good repair, to allow the undertaking of a voyage around Cape Horn without any preparation for it. Nothing could show Porter's character and abilities better than this circumstance. He had now been but fourteen years in the navy, was commanding a fine frigate, and left to his own resources to act against the strongest naval power in the world. We are led to dwell upon this, in consequence of so often hearing commanding officers of the present day, complaining at the hardship of being obliged to go to sea, with such young lieutenants, graduates of the naval academy where every facility is offered for an officer to become familiar with his profession. The particular deficiency complained of, is in seamanship, which is the most important of all branches of the naval profession.

It must be remembered, that these young officers are actually eight or ten years in the service, before they reach the rank of lieutenant. There must, therefore, be something radically wrong, which will not enable these gentlemen to take command of a ship's deck, now that steam has almost usurped the place of sails; and, there is often little more to do, than to direct the course of a machine, almost as easy to manage as a wheelbarrow!

The fault of the system is not so much in the deficiency of professional knowledge, as in the conduct of the commanding officers, who do not allow the young men to build upon the groundwork laid at the naval academy; and, if they would force them into responsible positions, and enable them to think for themselves, there would be less complaint.

Another glaring defect in the system of educating young officers, is making mathematics take such a prominent position on the list of qualifications required. Of course it is necessary that an officer should be proficient in this branch; but it will not give him that knowledge which is necessary to manœuvre and fight a ship. Mathematical

minds are generally influenced by certain rules, which prevent them from arriving at prompt conclusions; and it often happens, that a man with a fondness for mathematics, becomes so infatuated with his *formulæ* as to lose all taste for the less abstruse, but far more important parts of his profession. Such a man will make an excellent teacher of mathematics, but may not make a good admiral to fight a fleet. Aptitude for the profession, is a more necessary qualification than the knowledge of many of the subjects taught at a naval academy. A lad who has this aptitude must be intelligent, and will probably stand well in all branches; though he may not stand at the head in any. It is possible to evince the highest aptitude for the practical duties of a naval life, which comprehend seamanship, gunnery, navigation and general information, without the knowledge of a single algebraic sign. Hence, it often occurs that a lad, with all these qualifications, fails at his final examination, from the fact that he is "deficient" in mathematics; that is, he wants the fractional part of a figure, to enable him to secure a "passing average;" which, by regulation, has become as fixed a matter as one of the laws of the Medes and Persians. This seems an unwise regulation, for the rule should be modified to suit circumstances; professional aptitude being taken into consideration, when a lad falls behind a little in mathematics. It costs the government about $28,000, to graduate a cadet midshipman, and then to hear that a commander cannot sleep for want of confidence in his lieutenant's knowledge of seamanship, makes us sigh for the days of old, when young men seemed to imbibe seamanship the moment their feet touched a ship's deck.

But to return to our subject. The Essex seemed to have a great deal of ill luck, with head winds and foul weather, in her passage to Cape Horn. As to prizes, they were hardly to be looked for on the course she was sailing; however, the crew had perfect health, and great confidence in their commander. After passing the latitude of the Straits of Magellan, the ship kept along the coast of Terra del Fuego, to pass through the Straits of Le Maire; but, in approaching Staten Land, the weather setting in very heavy and the wind increasing, the Captain found himself almost

in the breakers before he knew it; and the ship was extricated from her perilous position with some difficulty. His calculations had been so good, that notwithstanding head winds and currents, he found himself in the middle of the passage, and made all sail to the southward.

It would be tedious to recount all the events of the passage around Cape Horn, and the struggles against dreadful weather in that stormy ocean. Everything that could be done to get the ship safely through, and to keep up the spirits of the men, was done; and, though the struggle was a severe one, they succeeded, and soon forgot their hardships in more genial climes; thinking with satisfaction, of the host of enemies whom they had left behind, to verify the old saying "a stern chase is a long chase."

On the 24th of February, 1813, the Essex was considered to be fairly in the Pacific; the skies became serene, and they were able to make sail, this being the first pleasant weather experienced since leaving Staten Land. With all their hardships, the health of the crew was better than when the ship left the United States; and the weather being now settled, all hands went to work, with smiling faces, to repair damages; the guns that had been dismounted, were got up from below, and all were happy at the prospect of soon reaching some Chilian port.

On the 6th of March the ship anchored in a harbor in the Island of Mocha. Here, the officers and crew landed, and shot some pigs and horses which afforded savory food after their long abstinence from fresh meat; the horses being preferred to the hogs as the latter had an unpalatable flavor.

On the 7th, at daylight, the Essex was obliged to leave this place and put to sea, having started her anchor in a fresh breeze that sprung up. It was necessary to go into port, and on the morning of the 11th, Capt. Porter stood in, and reconnoitred the town of Valparaiso, which, with its numerous shipping and long line of white buildings, afforded a pleasant sight to those on board the frigate. Capt. Porter kept the sea, however, until the 15th, when he went in and anchored off the town.

To a seafearing man, the reading of *Porter's Journal*, with its recommendations as to the best method of passing

safely around Cape Horn, would be full of interest; and in former years, when charts and sailing directions were not so common as at present, *Porter's Journal* was much in vogue with seafaring men; as well for the nautical information it contains, as for the interesting details of the exciting adventures of the little frigate, whose name is so famous in our naval history. The book is still quoted, and will ever remain a valuable work of reference.

CHAPTER VIII.

Before entering the port of Valparaiso, Capt. Porter took every precaution to discover if any of the enemy's cruisers were there; since he had no reason to suppose that the authorities would prove hospitable, or protect him against a superior force of English ships. Previous to anchoring, Lieut. Downes was sent on shore to inform the governor that the Essex was a United States frigate much in need of supplies, her store ship having been lost off Cape Horn, and that Capt. Porter claimed his hospitality. The Captain was induced to use this little artifice, from a knowledge of the unaccommodating character of the Spaniards, who always imposed restrictions on foreign vessels entering the ports of their American possessions. From the stand the United States had taken not long before, in relation to the Floridas, Porter had no hope of being treated with much consideration by the Spaniards; but he hoped, under plea of distress, to extort permission to take in a supply of provisions and fill up his water casks. However, before the Essex reached her anchorage, the captain of the port came on board in company with Lieut. Downes, with the offer of every civility and assistance that Valparaiso could afford.

Capt. Porter now learned, to his suprise, that the Chilians had renounced their allegiance to Spain; that all her ports were open to the world, and that they looked to the United States for example and assistance; and that the presence of the Essex was a particularly welcome event, as their commerce had been harrassed by corsairs, sent by the viceroy of Peru, to capture all American vessels bound to Chilian ports. It was further stated, that five of the Peruvian corsairs had disappeared from before Valparaiso only a few days before, after capturing several American whalers and sending them to Callao.

This news was a great relief to those on board the Essex, who now saw a prospect of finding shelter in friendly ports while on the coast of Chili, and of a speedy departure from Valparaiso to carry out their commander's cherished plans against the enemy's commerce. After saluting the town with 21 guns, which were promptly returned, the Captain, and officers of the Essex, paid their respects to the Governor Don Francisco Lastre, who received them with great kindness. The American brig Colt, which was at anchor in the port, saluted the Essex with nine guns, which were returned with seven; so that very unexpectedly to those on board the frigate, this had proved a day of jubilee. Had the Spanish flag been flying, it is likely the Essex would have been refused admission.

The Americans soon found, by associating with the government attachés, that they were among a set of staunch republicans, anxious to establish a state of things such as existed in the United States. Though it could not be concealed that some of the old Spanish leaven still existed among them, and in forming a government of liberty and equality, a few designing men were striving to obtain despotic power. Hence it was, that although the governor, an ex-officer in the Spanish navy, had been chosen on account of his supposed liberal principles, he was an extremely mild sort of republican, evidently desirous of keeping on the right side in event of Chili again resuming its allegiance to Spain. However, his friendly sentiments towards the Americans were evidently sincere, and were duly appreciated by those on board the frigate.

A courier was immediately dispatched to the city of Santiago, the capital of Chili, to inform the American consul general, Mr. Poinsett, of the arrival of the Essex; and arrangements were made for a supply of wood, water and provisions, which latter were cheap and abundant.

The governor and suite next visited the Essex, and were received with appropriate honors. Many of the natives had never before seen a frigate, the Essex being the first that had entered the port within their recollection. The Standard, a British ship of the line, had called at Valparaiso four months previously, on her way to Lima, but owing to some misunderstanding, there was little intercourse between her officers and the Chilians. The governor and suite remained on board for two hours, visiting every part of the ship, and were much astonished that Anglo-Americans as they called our people, could build and manage a vessel of such large size.

Next evening, the governor entertained the captain and officers of the Essex at his residence.

A few days afterwards, Capt. Porter received an invitation from the American consul general, in the name of the Chilian government, to visit the capital. It seems that the news of the Essex's arrival in Valparaiso was received with great joy at Santiago, the bells were rung and the city illuminated. It was believed that Captain Porter had brought, from his government, proposals for alliance with Chili and assurances of assistance to the latter, in her struggle for independence. Had the United States taken this course with the Spanish American republics, in their early efforts for independence, openly espousing their cause as we were bound to do, we should now exercise an immense influence over the whole continent, and American prestige would control every nation bordering on the Pacific ocean; but we did nothing of the kind, and although ourselves greatly indebted to foreign aid, for that independence we prize so highly, yet we shut our ears to the appeals of those little republics for help, in their desperate struggle for life and liberty. By acting on the selfish principles laid down by our first president, who desired us to abstain from "entangling alliances;" or, in other words to refuse assistance to weaker nations, we

have alienated all the Spanish American governments, and given English merchants a predominating influence. But to return to the Essex. Capt. Porter, desirous of making some acknowledgment for the kind attentions he had received, invited the ladies of Valparaiso to a ball on board his ship, on conclusion of an entertainment given at the house of Mr. Blanquo the vice consul. The consul general had meanwhile arrived from Santiago, and been saluted with eleven guns.

While the captain and officers of the Essex were on shore, with boats to take the ladies to the ship, which had been prepared for their entertainment, an officer came to inform Captain Porter that a large frigate had appeared, and was standing in toward the harbor. All took an unceremonious leave of the fair *señoritas*, and repaired immediately on board, where Capt. Porter found that his young first lieutenant, anticipating his wishes, had the ship all ready for getting underway. The stranger was made out to be a 32 gun frigate, the Essex's cables were cut and she was soon under a cloud of sail steering for the approaching vessel, which, to the intense disappointment of all hands, proved to be a Portuguese frigate in quest of a supply of flour for Lisbon. As there was every prospect of an engagement, when the Essex left the harbor, Mr. Poinsett and several Americans and Spaniards, including ———, went on board to share the dangers, and were seemingly much disappointed at the turn of affairs. The hills too were covered with spectators all praying for the success of the Americans. As to the ladies who had been invited to the ball on board, they were all on the hills watching the Essex, and frankly acknowledged that the sight of an engagement would more than compensate for the loss of the entertainment on shipboard.

Next day, the wind being light, the ship returned to her old anchorage; and by means of drags (an invention of Capt. Porter), recovered her cables which had been slipped so suddenly when the strange frigate hove in sight.

The captain and his officers made themselves very popular with the citizens of Valparaiso, by means of those attentions which American naval officers delight to ex-

tend to foreigners, frequently to their own pecuniary disadvantage, in cases where the expense should properly devolve on our government. Foreign officers are liberally supplied by their governments with the means of entertaining and returning national courtesies, while our government has ever been willing to allow its naval officers to expend for this purpose a portion of their own small pay. The evening before the Essex was to depart from Valparaiso, the governor and wife, with many of the citizens, paid a farewell visit to the ship.

Just previous to their leaving port, an American whale ship arrived; and the master, whose name was Worth, informed Capt. Porter that a few days before he had spoken two armed English whale ships off the coast; that three other American whale ships were in company, and that the Englishmen gave him the first intelligence he had received, of the declaration of war with England. They further informed him that they were daily in expectation of receiving authority to capture American merchant vessels. Capt. Worth told Captain Porter that there were several English whalers cruising among the Galapagos islands, and off the coast of Peru, and recommended him to proceed to those places, where he would be certain to meet them, with such detailed information of their movements as he gave. This gentleman represented our whalers, who were numerous, as in a helpless condition, exposed to capture by the armed English merchant vessels, carrying from fifteen to twenty guns each and well manned. As our whale ships kept the sea for six months at a time, most of them were ignorant that war existed, and were liable to fall an easy prey to the British. Captain Worth also reported that a British letter-of-marque had captured an American ship, and carried her into Callao; but the government of Peru had not permitted her to remain, and she had proceeded to St. Helena to take convoy for England.

The pleasant time spent by Captain Porter and his officers and crew with the hospitable citizens of Valparaiso, did not for a moment prevent their making every preparation for sea; although, considering the long and stormy passage round Cape Horn, they would have been excusable in desiring a longer relaxation; but one and all burned

to pursue the enemy, and one week after they dropped anchor, they were again underway and standing to the northward.

At daylight on the morning of the 25th, a sail was reported to the N. E., and chase was given. She proved to be the American whale ship Charles, four months from Lima, where she had been sent by a Peruvian privateer, but was liberated after paying costs. It appears that every nation, that chose to do so, preyed upon our commerce, merely because our government was too economical to maintain vessels of war, in distant seas, sufficient for its protection, wasting their means on a lot of gunboats which were almost useless for any purpose. Capt. Gardner informed Capt. Porter, that two days before, in company with the American whale ships Walker and Barclay, he had been chased and fired into by a Spanish and an English ship which had taken possession of the above named vessels. Sail was consequently crowded on the Essex for Coquimbo, in the hope of coming up with those ships; the Charles keeping in company.

At 8 A.M., chase was given to a sail to the northward, and at meridian the Essex was close enough to discover her to be a vessel of war disguised as a whaler. She soon showed Spanish colors, when English colors were hoisted on board the Essex, and a gun fired to leeward, which the Spaniard returned. Directions had been given to the Charles to hoist an English Jack over the American ensign. When within a mile of the Essex, the Spaniard continuing to approach, fired a shot across the frigate's bow for no apparent reason unless to show his arrogance. Captain Porter, recognizing the vessel as one that had long been harrassing our commerce, was so exasperated that he intended to fire a broadside into her, but reflecting that he was under British colors, and that the insult was not intended for the American flag, he contented himself by throwing a few shot *over* the Spaniard, who soon lowered a boat and sent her to the Essex. Perceiving the boat to be armed, Capt. Porter sent her back with orders to the Spanish captain, to run down under his lee and repair on board to apologize. The boat soon returned with a lieutenant bringing the vessel's commission, and stating that

the captain was too sick to leave his cabin. The vessel proved to be the Peruvian privateer Nereyda of fifteen guns; and from her the information was obtained that she was cruising for American vessels, and had captured the Barclay and Walker at Coquimbo, but the British letter-of-marque, Nimrod, had driven the Spaniard off, and taken possession of the two whalers. The privateer was in search of the Nimrod, for which vessel he had mistaken the Essex. The lieutenant stated that the Spaniards were the allies of Great Britain, whose flag had always been respected, and that the privateer's sole object in cruising was the capture of American vessels. He admitted that the crews of the Barclay and Walker were on board his ship; in fact, made all the confessions necessary for his condemnation. On investigation, it was found that the Americans on board the Nereyda, to the number of twenty-three, had been plundered of everything they possessed; the Spaniards assigning no other motive for their capture, except that they were Americans. Both vessels had full cargoes of oil and were on their return to the United States when captured, having simply put into Coquimbo for refreshments. Capt. Porter now showed the stars and stripes at his peak, and fired two shots over the freebooter without much thought where they struck, and the Spaniard hauled down his colors.

Next morning Capt. Porter directed all the Spaniard's guns and ammunition to be thrown overboard, together with her light sails, and sent her back to Callao under courses, with a letter to the governor of Lima, in which he says:

"I have therefore to ensure the good understanding which should ever exist between the government of the United States and the provinces of Spanish America, determined to prevent in future such vexatious and piratical conduct, and with this view have deprived the Nereyda of the means of doing American commerce any further harm for the present; and have sent her to Lima, in order that her commander may meet with such punishment from your excellency, as his offence has deserved."

We may imagine the feelings of the haughty viceroy, on receipt of this letter, from an officer belonging to a government of which he knew scarcely anything. The

commander of the Essex no doubt, had the case of the Tripolitan corsair Mahomet Sous in his mind when he ordered the Spanish vessel to be dismantled; though he had little hope that the pirate would receive the bastinado like his Turkish prototype. The capture of the Nereyda had however, the effect intended, for the Spaniards never again troubled our vessels while the Essex remained in those waters.

Captain Porter now stood in for Coquimbo to look for the Nimrod and her two prizes. A boat was sent in at night under Lieut. Downes, and every part of the harbor examined; the fort, in the meanwhile, firing alarm guns at the sight of the Essex's lights displayed to show the boat her position. Finding the Nimrod was not in this vicinity, Porter determined to follow her, as her capture was of the greatest importance to our commerce. He communicated his intention to Captains Gardner and West, advising the former to take the Charles to Coquimbo and demand protection, and the latter to proceed to St. Jago and lay his claims before the government. The Charles accordingly made sail for Coquimbo, with all the Nereyda's prisoners on board except nine who joined the Essex; and the frigate made all sail in another direction.

The reader can judge of the unprotected condition of our commerce in the Pacific at that time, and how little respect the South American provinces had for a government, that had never before taken the slightest trouble to look after its great interests in that quarter. At that time we had, on the coast of Peru, 23 whale ships worth, with their cargoes of oil, two and a half millions of dollars, and these were at the mercy not only of the English armed whalers, but of any of the Spanish provincial cruisers that chose to trouble them. Our government had no standing whatever, until Capt. Porter took upon himself the duty of teaching these marauders the respect due to the United States.

Captain Porter ascertained that there were at least twenty British whale ships on the coast, nearly all armed; and all of not less than 400 tons burden, and that their cargoes in England would not be worth less than $4,000,000. All of which was exposed to the Essex and her crew, who

now began to indulge in brilliant anticipations of prize money; thinking that fortune had been long enough against them. The British ship of war, Standard, was still in the Pacific, and before making a sweep upon the Galapagos islands (where the British whalers were wont to congregate), Porter determined to find out whether she was at Lima, for he knew that letters had been sent from Valparaiso to inform the Standard of his presence in the South sea. However, he hoped to get time to commit great havoc on the enemy's commerce before the news reached the English 74 gun ship. Information had been sent, from Buenos Ayres, that the Essex was on the coast of Brazil; and that the Constitution had sunk the British frigate Java and captured her convoy; also that the Wasp had captured a British sloop of war, and these gratifying results made Captain Porter anxious to be doing something brilliant himself.

At 6 A.M., on the 27th, three sail were made out, standing in for the harbor of Callao, and every effort was made on board the frigate to cut them off. The head-most of the three vessels seemed to be the Barclay; and, while all the Essex's light sails were wet down to make them hold the wind better, the boats were prepared to send into port and bring the ship out in case she should escape past the island of San Lorenzo. Fortunately the Barclay got becalmed after getting around the point of the island, while the wind took the frigate to within a hundred yards of her. Boats were then lowered and the prize was towed out with some difficulty. Captain Porter now hoisted British colors; and the Barclay was directed to hoist the British colors over the American, to make it appear that she was a prize to a British frigate. The numerous vessels in port now hoisted their colors, most of them carried the Spanish flag; but one armed ship was English, though she did not answer to the description of the Nimrod. Of the two other vessels, chased by the Essex, one was a coasting brig, the other a Spanish ship that had sailed from Valparaiso before the frigate; but the latter was now so disguised that it was unlikely the Spaniard would recognize her.

The crew of the Essex were much disappointed at not finding some British vessels off Callao, as this place was

one of their points of rendezvous. We mention these details, which may seem tedious to the general reader, to show the movements of the Essex, and the difficulties and disappointments continually met with, which were exercising a very depressing effect upon the ship's company.

Porter now arranged with the captain of the Barclay to keep company with the Essex; as his only chance of safety; for no port on the coast would afford an American vessel protection against British cruisers, especially since the treatment of the Nereyda by the Essex. The two ships accordingly shaped their course north west for the Galapagos islands, keeping at a distance of from 100 to 150 miles from the coast, spreading out in the day time but closing again at night, and seeing nothing along the Peruvian coast except a few coasters, and now and then, a catamaran, which is a rude vessel made of logs used by the natives. These catamarans make voyages of several hundred miles; and this will give an idea of the fine weather, and smooth seas in those latitudes, which enable such frail craft to make such long voyages.

Hearing from the captain of a catamaran, that there were no vessels in Payta, Porter relinquished his purpose of visiting that port, and bore away directly for the Galapagos islands. Seven boats were now specially prepared for attacking the whale fishers (many of which were heavily armed), and extra men assigned as musketeers and boarders, and signals were established, by which to communicate with them. The boats carried seventy men and were to be under the command of Lieut. Downes.

On the morning of the 17th, Chatham island, one of the Galapagos group, was made, bearing N. W. by N., distant thirty-five miles; and at 7 P.M., the two ships were abreast of the anchorage at the north west part of Hood's island. To avoid the dangerous currents and reefs, the ships ran off the land at night. The Galapagos group contains eleven good sized islands, and several small ones. They were a great rendezvous for whalers, which often came there to fill up with wood and water, and to lay in a supply of the celebrated land tortoise, weighing sometimes from three to four hundred pounds each. The vessels generally took on board several hundred of these animals, which

have been known to live and thrive for months in the hold without food or water.

At Charles island, a primitive post office was found, consisting of a box nailed to a tree, and used by the whalers to deposit such information as they might want taken home by vessels bound to Europe and America. The contents of "Hathaway's Post Office" gave information that in June previous six ships (including the Nimrod) with nearly 2500 barrels of oil had touched here on their way to Albemarle island, the largest of the group. One of the letters bearing the name of the master of an American whaler is so curious, that we insert a copy, although it hardly sustains the claim of our countrymen to superior enlightenment.

"Ship Sukey. John Macy 7½ Months out, 150 barrels, 75 days from Lima. No oil Since Leaving that Port. Spaniards Very Savage Lost on the Braziel Bank John Sealin Apprentice to Capt. Benjamin Worth fell from the fore topsaill Yard In A Gale of wind Left Diana Capt. paddock 14 day since, 250 Barrels I Leave this port this Day with 250 Turpen 8 Boat Load Wood Yesterday Went Up to Patts Landing East Side to the Starboard hand of the Landing 1½ miles Saw 100 Turpen 20 Rods A part Road Very Bad.

"Yours Forevir

"John Macy."

Pat's Landing, referred to in the above letter, had its name from Patrick Watkins, a wild Irishman who deserted from an English vessel some years before, and took up his abode in this island; and as his story is interesting, as showing what sort of characters were drifting about the Pacific sixty years ago, we here insert it in the words of Captain Porter.

"Watkins, some years since, left an English ship and took up his abode on this island, built himself a miserable hut, about a mile from the landing (called after him), in a valley containing about two acres of ground capable of cultivation; and, perhaps, the only spot on the island which affords sufficient moisture for the purpose. Here he succeeded in raising potatoes and pumpkins, in considerable quantities, which he generally exchanged for rum or sold for cash. The appearance of this man, from the accounts

I have received of him, was the most dreadful than can be imagined; ragged clothes scarce sufficient to cover his nakedness, and covered with vermin; his red hair and beard matted, his skin much burnt, from constant exposure to the sun, and so wild and savage in his manner and appearance, that he struck every one with horror. For several years this wretched being lived by himself on this desolate spot, without any apparent desire than that of procuring rum in sufficient quantities to keep himself intoxicated; and, at such times, after an absence from his hut of several days, he would be found in a state of perfect insensibility, rolling among the rocks of the mountains. He appeared to be reduced to the lowest grade of which human nature is capable, and seemed to have no desire beyond the tortoises and other animals of the island, except that of getting drunk. But this man, wretched and miserable as he may appear, was neither destitute of ambition nor incapable of undertaking an enterprise that would have appalled the heart of any other man; nor was he devoid of the talent of rousing others to second his hardihood.

"He by some means became possessed of an old musket, and a few charges of powder and ball; and the possession of this weapon first set into action all his ambitious plans. He felt himself strong as the sovereign of the island, and was desirous of proving his strength on the first human being who fell in his way, which happened to be a negro, who was left in charge of a boat, belonging to an American ship that had touched there for refreshments. Patrick came down to the beach where the boat lay, armed with his musket (now become his constant companion), and directed the negro, in an authoritative manner, to follow him, and on his refusal snapped his musket at him twice, which luckily missed fire. The negro, however, became intimidated and followed him. Patrick now shouldered his musket, marched off before, and on his way up the mountains exultingly informed the negro he was henceforth to work for him and become his slave; and that his good or bad treatment would depend on his future conduct; but arriving at a narrow defile and perceiving Patrick off his guard, the negro seized the musket, grasped him in his

arms, threw him down, tied his hands behind, shouldered him and carried him to his boat, and when the crew arrived he was taken on board the ship. An English smuggler was lying in the harbor at the same time, the captain of which sentenced Patrick to be severely whipped on board both vessels, which was put in execution; and he was afterwards taken on shore, handcuffed by the Englishmen, who compelled him to make known where he had concealed the few dollars he had been able to accumulate from the sale of his potatoes and pumpkins, which they took from him. But while they were busy in destroying his hut and garden, the wretched being made his escape, and concealed himself among the rocks in the interior of the island, until the ship had sailed, when he returned from his hiding place, and by means of an old file, which he drove into a tree, freed himself from the handcuffs. He now meditated a severe revenge, but concealed his intentions. Vessels continued to touch there, and Patrick as usual, to furnish them with vegetables; but from time to time he was enabled, by administering potent draughts of his darling liquor to some of the men of their crews and getting them so drunk that they were rendered insensible, to conceal them until the ship had sailed; when finding themselves entirely dependent on him they willingly enlisted under his banner, became his slaves, and he the most absolute of tyrants. By this means he had augmented the number to five, including himself; and every means was used by him to endeavor to procure arms for them, but without effect. It is supposed that his object was to have surprised some vessel, massacred her crew and taken her off. While Patrick was meditating his plans two ships (an American and English vessel), touched there, and applied to Patrick for vegetables. He promised them the greatest abundance, provided they would send their boats to his landing, and their people to bring them from his garden, informing them that his rascals had become so indolent of late that he could not get them to work. This arrangement was agreed to; two boats were sent from each vessel and hauled on the beach. Their crews all went to Patrick's habitation, but neither he nor any of his people were to be found; and after waiting until their patience

was exhausted, they returned to the beach, where they found only the wreck of three of their boats, which were broken to pieces, and the fourth one missing. They succeeded, however, after much difficulty, in getting around to the bay opposite to their ships, where other boats were sent to their relief; and the commanders of the ships, apprehensive of some other trick, saw no security except in a flight from the island, leaving Patrick and his gang in quiet possession of the boat. But before they sailed they put a letter in a keg, giving intelligence of the affair, and moored it in the bay, where it was found by Captain Randall, but not until he had sent his boat to Patrick's landing for the purpose of procuring refreshments; and as may be easily supposed, he felt no little inquietude until her return, when she brought him a letter from Patrick to the following purport, which was found in his hut.

Sir: I have made repeated application to captains of vessels to sell me a boat, or to take me from this place, but in every instance met with a refusal. An opportunity presented to possess myself of one and I took advantage of it. I have been a long time endeavoring by hard labor and sufferings to accumulate wherewith to make myself comfortable; but at different times have been robbed and maltreated, and in a late instance by Captain Paddock, whose conduct in punishing me, and robbing me of about five hundred dollars, in cash and other articles neither agrees with the principles he professes, nor is such as his sleek coat would lead one to expect.[1]

On the 29th of May, 1809, I sail from the enchanted island in the Black Prince, bound to the Marquesas. Do not kill the old hen, she is now sitting and will soon have chickens.

'(signed) FATHERLESS OBERLUS.'

"Patrick arrived alone at Guayaquil in his open boat, the rest who sailed with him having perished for want of water, or, as is generally supposed, were put to death by him on his finding the water to grow scarce. From thence he proceeded to Payta, where he wound himself into the affections of a tawny damsel, and prevailed on her to consent to accompany him back to his enchanted island, the beauties of which he no doubt painted in glowing colors; but from his

[1] Paddock was of the Society of Friends.

savage appearance, he was there considered, by the police, as a suspicious person; and being found under the keel of a small vessel then ready to be launched, and suspected of some improper intentions, he was confined in Payta gaol where he now remains; and probably owing to this circumstance Charles island, as well as the rest of the Galapagos, may remain unpopulated for many ages to come.

"This reflection may naturally lead us to a consideration of the question concerning the population of the other islands, scattered about the Pacific ocean, respecting which so many conjectures have been hazarded. I shall only hazard one, which is briefly this: that former ages may have produced men equally as bold and as daring as Pat, and women as willing as his fair one to accompany them in their adventurous voyages. And when we consider the issue which might be produced from a union between a red haired wild Irishman, and a copper colored mixed blood squaw, we need not be any longer surprised at the different varieties in human nature."

We will not follow the Essex, in her various movements through these islands, nor give an account of Porter's researches into their natural history, nor his speculations in regard to their physical geography. He stayed here no longer than was necessary, having matters more important on hand than the exploration of dreary regions, and the catching of seal and iguanas. The boats under Lieut. Downes scoured the bays and inlets of the group, in every direction, for vessels, but returned unsuccessful; and the examination was then pursued in the Essex under sail.

As in the early part of this century everything relating to what was a comparatively unknown ocean, was interesting, Captain Porter published in his journal a minute account of the Galapagos islands; and these are, probably, the best sailing directions extant, even at the present day.

As the Essex had been for nearly a fortnight among the islands, and had searched them thoroughly without success, it was supposed that the whalemen had abandoned the location, when at daylight on the 29th of April 1813, after passing a restless night, Capt. Porter was rejoiced to hear the cry "Sail ho!" echo through the ship; and in a

moment all hands rushed on deck. A large ship was seen bearing west, and chase was at once given. In about an hour two others were discovered, bearing S. W. The captain felt sure they were British whalers, and, as it was certain to fall calm at mid day, that all of them would be captured. By nine o'clock the Essex, under British colors, spoke the first ship, which proved to be the Montezuma, Capt. Baxter, with 1400 barrels of sperm oil. Baxter was invited on board, and while in the cabin giving such information as he considered valuable to enable the supposed British captain to capture American whalers, his crew were being transferred to the frigate, a prize crew put on board the whaler, and the Essex continued her pursuit of the other vessels which were now trying to make their escape. Before noon it fell calm, and the Essex was about 8 miles distant from the strangers. Fearing they might escape, the boats were manned, and sent off in two divisions under Lieuts. Downes and Wilmer. At two o'clock, the Americans neared the enemy, when the latter hoisted English colors and fired several guns. The boats now pulled for the largest ship, which kept her guns trained on them as they approached, and Lieut. Downes gave the signal to board; but on a demand for surrender, the Englishman hauled down his flag, his consort following his example. A breeze springing up, the prizes bore down for the Essex, which welcomed the return of the successful party with three hearty cheers.

The prizes proved to be the Georgianna and Policy, each of about 280 tons burden, and with their cargoes were valued in England at half a million of dollars. The ease with which the vessels were taken, gave our sailors rather a poor opinion of British valor, which was certainly an unfair view of the case. They would no doubt have repulsed any number of savages, but were not disciplined up to the point requisite for driving off a ship of war's boats. The possession of their prizes made the officers and crew of the Essex forget, in a moment, their hardships and disappointments. This was the first time, for nearly five months, that they had taken a prize, and they began to fear that fortune had deserted them.

As some murmurings had, on one or two occasions, been

heard, from certain of the crew, Captain Porter, with a view to prevent such demonstrations, took this opportunity to issue the following:

Sailors and Marines: Fortune has at length smiled on us, because we deserved her smiles; and the first time she enabled us to display free trade and sailors' rights assisted by your good conduct, she put in our possession near half a million of the enemy's property.

Continue to be zealous, enterprising and patient, and we will yet render the name of the Essex as terrible to the enemy as that of any other vessel, before we return to the United States. My plans shall be made known to you at a future time.

April 30, 1813. D. PORTER.

There is no method better calculated to win the confidence and attachment of a crew, than for a commander to hold this sort of intercourse with them; and it may be safely said, that no one will ever be eminently successful who does not possess the confidence of those under his control. Porter's little manifesto pleased the sailors very much, and they were disposed to be in excellent humor when they calculated the probable amount of their prize money.

All the wants of the Essex, except that of water, were now relieved; for, from the stores of the captured ships, there was obtained an abundant supply of all the articles required in a vessel's outfit, and a large quantity of provisions such as whalemen always carry. The tortoises, with which the prizes were abundantly supplied, were very beneficial in checking the scurvy, which had begun to show itself among the frigate's crew. Disgusting as is the appearance of these huge creatures, no animal affords a more delicate and wholesome food. However annoying it may have been to the unfortunate Britons, to see their delicious turtle melting away before the insatiate Yankees, they had at least the consolation of sharing with the others, for Porter treated his prisoners just the same as he did his crew, so long as they merited such indulgence. He considered this as a matter of duty, and though some of the people whom he treated thus kindly were ungrateful enough to spread false reports on the sub-

ject, he always had proof sufficient to rebut their assertions, whenever he desired to do so. A few days after capturing the whalers, fifty large turtle were picked up and brought on board. They had floated about in the same place where they had been thrown overboard to clear the ships for action, incapable of any exertion.

Midshipman Odenheimer was placed in command of the Montezuma, and Midshipman Cowan of the Policy; they were furnished with a set of signals, and in case of separation the Island of La Plata, and Bay of Tumbez were appointed as places of rendezvous.

The Georgianna was a noble vessel, sailed well, and having been built for the East India Company's service, was well calculated for a cruiser. She was accordingly mounted with sixteen guns, and a number of swivels; and furnished with all the small arms and cutlasses found on board the other prizes, so that she was a match for any British letter-of-marque to be found in those waters.

Some of the seamen captured in the prizes, volunteered their services—a portion of them were Americans; but the native born Britons were not in the least abashed at offering to fight against their flag, for at that time England gave no protection to her seamen, who were liable to impressment at any time, and made to serve on small pay against their will.

The command of the Georgianna was now given to Lieut. Downes, with a crew of forty-one men, including six volunteers. The remainder of the captured men were kept on board the Essex. "The sloop of war," as she was now styled, was an important addition to the fighting force under Porter's command; and in case of accident to the frigate, they could look for relief while the Georgianna remained seaworthy. On the 8th of May, the Georgianna hoisted the American flag and saluted the Essex with seventeen guns, which were returned with three cheers.

Porter's whole attention was now devoted to getting back to the Galapagos, expecting, from information he had received, to meet several British whalers there with nearly full cargoes. The stock of wood and water, on board the Essex and her prizes, was rapidly diminishing, and it was necessary to get into port as soon as possible. The calm

weather was made the most of in overhauling and setting up the Essex's rigging, and painting the vessel inside and out, so that all the time in port might be devoted to getting in wood and water.

Capt. Porter was very particular in keeping a strict account of all captured stores, provisions, money, &c., used in the service of the United States, with their value as appraised by a board of officers appointed for the purpose. Many articles were appraised far below their value, but this action enabled the survivors of the Essex, when they reached the United States, to receive what was due them on account of articles used by the government. Such a course should always be followed by commanding officers, to guard the interests of their officers and men; but it frequently happens, that for want of such forethought, large amounts of captured property are used in the public service without the captors receiving one cent in return.

The Essex had now been at sea upwards of six months, and since leaving the United States, had not drawn on the government for a dollar, having depended on the amount furnished the purser when the ship sailed, to pay for the outfit in Valparaiso. The $50,000, captured in the Nocton, had given the sailors plenty of cash; and now the frigate was once more filled with provisions and stores at the enemy's expense. Better than all, the government was provided with a new cruiser, of whose existence it was not aware, and whose equipment had not drawn a cent from the public exchequer. Half a million dollars worth of property had been captured, and a smart brig of war (the Nocton), had been sent in to add to our naval force; and the colonial governments had been taught to respect our flag, by the summary treatment of the Peruvian privateer Nereyda.

The Essex had now commenced in earnest her career of destruction to British commerce.

CHAPTER IX.

FINDING that owing to strong N. W. currents the ships were making little progress, Capt. Porter took the Montezuma (the dullest sailor among the prizes) in tow, but found that even then the Essex could beat the fastest of the other vessels with all their canvass spread. The breechings of the frigate's guns were now discovered to be rotten, a circumstance which caused great uneasiness, for a time, until they managed to find the proper rope on board the prizes to make the necessary repairs.

On the 12th, an island was discovered ahead, but as some doubt existed whether or not it was James island, Lieut. Downes was directed to proceed in the Georgianna to search the island, while the frigate proceeded to the continent for water. Rendezvous were appointed, and Downes was directed, after disposing of the Georgianna's cargo in Valparaiso, to continue making short cruises in that neighborhood until Porter's arrival there. The vessels then separated, and the Essex and her prizes proceeded, with the Barclay, to Charles island, and came to anchor on the 12th of May, 1813.

The "post office" contained no letters, but there were evidences of its having been visited since the Essex was last in port. Porter now regretted the absence of the Georgianna as she could have proceeded in search of the vessel which it was supposed had gone to Albemarle island, the general rendezvous of British whalers. With great difficulty, a small supply of wood and water was laid in; and while on this duty the Georgianna hove in sight, and thus, owing to the intricate currents and imperfect charts, these vessels were brought together after separating to go in quite different directions. The Georgianna was immediately dispatched in pursuit of the strange vessel that had touched at Charles island; and Lieut. Downes was instructed, on his return, to look at the foot of the stake,

where the post office box was nailed, for a bottle containing a letter of instructions.

Mr. Adams, the chaplain, was now dispatched, at his own request, with a couple of boats, to make a careful examination and survey of the large island; which duty he accomplished in a highly satisfactory manner, and returned to the ship on the 20th. Mr. Adams had determined the latitude and longitude of the principal points, but had found no landing place where wood and water could be procured. Immense land tortoises and green turtle were found in large numbers. One tortoise measured five feet and a half long, by four feet and one half wide, and three feet thick. Mr. Adams reported, that on the night of his return from the survey of Porter's island, he had passed within gunshot of a supposed English vessel bound towards Albemarle; in consequence of which, Porter determined to run down to Banks's bay in hopes of falling in with a prize, and getting from her a supply of water, which was greatly needed. Before getting under way a note was left for Lieut. Downes, giving him the latest information of their movements and proposed route.

The existence of our sailors in the Galapagos islands was on the whole a most happy one, the climate was pleasant, and although the labor of getting the tortoises (which were often dragged for several miles through briers and over rocks), and stowing them away on shipboard for future use was very great, yet the men did not mind it — so pleased were they with the novelty of their existence; and their abundant supply of the most delicious food in the world, that all their past hardships were forgotten. Besides the tortoises, the iguana, a huge, repulsive looking lizard, much prized by epicures, abounded in the island, and myraids of excellent fish of the black, red and yellow species of sheepshead, swarmed around the boats, and were captured with the greatest ease. Aquatic birds (shags, penguins, pelicans and others), frequented the island in great numbers, and were an acceptable variety to the sailors who are not often particular about their eating. Many a savory mess of "Galapagos mutton," as the jolly mariners called the tortoise flesh, was cooked on the hillsides or on the beach, in extemporized fire places. Not-

withstanding the quantity of this food devoured, the men never became satiated with it, for they generally were provided with the sauce of hunger, which as an appetizer far excels the famous Worcestershire.

While at Charles island, the prizes and Barclay were thoroughly overhauled and painted, so as to change their appearance as much as possible. The appearance of the Essex had been so frequently changed, that the Captain felt no apprehensions of her being recognized. The prisoners were allowed full liberty on shore, as some of them had contracted the scurvy, and for this indulgence they were very grateful. We merely mention this circumstance to show that Porter did not treat his prisoners with severity as was asserted in the English papers.

On the 21st of May, the Essex and her prizes got underway and stood to the S. W. About this time Dr. Robert Miller, the surgeon of the Essex, died of consumption, from which he had been suffering ever since leaving the United States. He had gone on board the Policy some time before, in order to be more quiet and comfortable than he could be in the frigate. On the 26th the body of the surgeon was committed to the deep, after funeral service by the chaplain; and Dr. Hoffman was appointed acting surgeon. Great care was now taken that no prizes should escape, the vessels were spread out, covering a space of twenty-five miles; they were approaching Albemarle, where English vessels were confidently expected.

On the 28th, as the Essex and her consorts were standing to the northward, a sail was discovered right ahead. Chase was immediately given, and at sunset the stranger was in plain sight from the frigate's deck; but little hope was felt of coming up with her, as it was feared she would alter her course in the darkness. However, Porter crowded on all sail and took every possible precaution to secure the prize, directing the different vessels to steer separate courses, so as to keep the stranger in sight next morning. At daylight, a sail was seen to the northward; but the wind beginning to die away, Captain Porter directed Lieut. Wilmer to proceed with three of the fastest of the frigate's boats to the Montezuma, to be joined by three more from that ship, and to take station before night, astern of the

chase, so that communication could be held with the Essex through the Motezuma by signal. By this arrangement it would be possible to be guided by flashes, and prevent the enemy from escaping during the darkness of the night. Lieut. Wilmer was ordered not to attack with the boats, until it should fall calm, and then to row with muffled oars and suprise the stranger by boarding, and to prevent any other attack no other arms than cutlasses, and boarding axes were given the men. Great was now the excitement on board the Essex, for here was a vessel supposed to be worth, with her cargo, at least one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, a good sum to be divided among the officers and crew.

Twenty-six hours had now passed away since the commencement of the chase. A short time after the boats left the ship a breeze sprung up, and the Essex signalling to the Montezuma to pick up the boats, crowded on all sail and soon came near enough to make the stranger out. The latter, seeing that her attempts to escape were hopeless, hove about and stood for the frigate. From the warlike appearance of the stranger, who carried a British ensign and pendant at the main, it was supposed that she might be a sloop of war, for which reason the Essex went to quarters and prepared to receive the enemy as well as her weak condition would allow, so many men being absent in prizes and boats, and the only officers on board besides the captain, were the chaplain, clerk and boatswain. On getting alongside the English ship, British colors were hoisted on board the Essex; the stranger was hailed and directed to repair on board, which order was no sooner complied with than another sail was reported from the mast head.

The prize was the letter-of-marque, Atlantic, Capt. Weir, mounting six 18 pounder guns, and employed in whaling. Lieut. McKnight was sent on board from the Montezuma, with a good crew, and ordered to pursue the new sail to the north and west, while the Essex steered northerly to cut her off. The Atlantic soon showed that her reputation of being a very fast sailor was not undeserved, for the Essex had very little advantage of her with all the sail she could carry, although the Atlantic had no studding sails set. In the darkness which soon came on, the prize was lost

sight of but soon discovered by some of the watchful eyes on board the Essex, and finally overhauled and brought to by a shot from the frigate. The commander was now directed to repair on board, but not immediately obeying the order, it was perceived that the strange ship was prepared for action, and that her crew were at quarters. A shot was fired between her masts to intimidate the captain, and he was threatened with a broadside, which admonition had the desired effect, and he went on board the frigate directly.

The prize proved to be the whaleship *letter-of-marque* Greenwich, a prime sailer. Thus, while the British were abusing Captain Porter for "breaking up the British whalefishery by his piracies," they prudently said nothing about having granted letters-of-marque to these *peaceful traders*, with authority to capture the unsuspecting American merchant vessels. This was the more inexcusable, as England had at the time nearly a thousand public armed vessels in opposition to the mere handful we had fitted out, to resist the many indignities that the British had heaped upon us. The fact is the world was not large enough for the English, and they were determined not to tolerate their Yankee competitors, and to use every available means to destroy their commerce, no matter how unjustifiable.

The captain of the Greenwich, who was well fortified with Dutch courage, expressed great regret that his ship and the Atlantic had not joined company, as he was sure they were more than a match for the frigate; and it is probable, in the weakened condition of the Essex, deprived of so many of her crew, that both ships together might have given trouble, and perhaps have escaped.

The captain of the Atlantic (an American from Nantucket where his family were living), expressed great pleasure at finding (as he supposed) a British frigate in those seas. He informed Capt. Porter, that he had sailed from England under convoy of the frigate Java, and had put into Porto Praya a short time before the Essex left there; that the Java had sailed in pursuit of the American whom it was generally believed had gone round the Cape of Good Hope. On his arrival at Concepcion, he heard that the Java had been sunk by the U. S. frigate Constitution.

The renegade informed Porter that he had left nine American whalers at Concepcion; that others were daily arriving, and that if he would go there he could capture the whole of them. On being asked how he could reconcile it to his conscience to sail under the British flag, to destroy American commerce, he answered that he found no difficulty in so doing, as though born in America, he was an Englishman at heart. This fellow, in spite of his corrupt heart, was of gentlemanly address; like all renegades, he was anxious to do his country as much harm as possible, by way of ingratiating himself with his new friends. He was soon undeceived, with regard to the Essex being an English frigate, and his feelings may be imagined.

Porter sympathized greatly with the unfortunate commanders of the Montezuma and Greenwich; and to make the evils of war bear as lightly as possible on them, he purchased from them for the use of the crew all their private adventure. By custom these would be considered prize of war, but Porter wished ever to err on the side of humanity; he could not, however, conceal his indignation against the renegade American, although he felt bound to give him the same indulgence he extended to the other prisoners. Notwithstanding the assurances of Capt. Porter, that they should receive as generous treatment as circumstances would permit, both the commander of the Atlantic and of the Greenwich, used the most abusive language towards the United States government, the ship and its officers, lavishing on the captain in particular as soon as his back was turned, the most scurrilous epithets, quite equal to anything that ever appeared in the *Quarterly Review*. The next day, Captain Porter determined to make these men sensible of the impropriety of their conduct, and did so without violating either the principles of humanity or the rules of war, with the result that both were so humbled by the sense of their conduct, as to make the most abject apologies.

On board the Atlantic was found a hundred tons of water, of which article both the Essex and her former prizes were very short. By this last capture had also been obtained an abundant supply of provisions, and naval stores, and seamen's clothing of excellent quality. As these vessels

were only a few days from James island, they had a stock of 800 tortoises of large size, sufficient for a month's fresh provisions for all the ships.

Lieut. McKnight was placed in command of the Atlantic and Lieut. Gamble of the marines (for want of sea officers), in command of the Greenwich. To make up for his want of nautical knowledge, two experienced seamen were placed with Lieut. Gamble as mates. Volunteers continued to offer their services from the captured ships, and as they generally *claimed to be Americans!* were accepted.

The whole effective force now at the disposal of Captain Porter was as follows: Essex, 46 guns, 245 men; Georgianna, 16 guns, 42 men; Atlantic, 6 guns, 12 men; Greenwich, 10 guns, 14 men; Montezuma, 2 guns, 10 men; Policy, 10 men; Total, 80 guns, 333 men; together with a midshipman and six men on board the Barclay. The prisoners amounted to 80; but as they had been distributed among the different ships, allowing them full rations, on condition of their assisting to work, they were found to be nearly as useful as the Essex's men, in navigating the prizes. Including prisoners the whole number of effective men amounted to 420.

The increased supply of water, caused Captain Porter to change his intentions of proceeding to the continent. The prizes were such good sailers, that he hoped by their taking the Barclay and Policy in tow, while the Essex took care of the Montezuma, to be able to get to the windward of the islands, so as to fall into the track of vessels bound from the continent, or to reach Charles island; and if the Georgianna was not there, leave instructions for her in the secret post office. This idea was at once acted upon and every effort was made to get windward of Albemarle; but without success, owing to the strong current, and nothing was left but to try and get around to the northward of the island. The next three days being calm, the opportunity was taken to get an anchor and cable and 4,000 gallons of water from the prizes. No sea going vessel could be better off than the Essex, for she was followed about by store-ships to supply all her wants.

The Greenwich proved to have been the vessel seen by Chaplain Adams while surveying, and the Atlantic was

the ship that had visited Charles island and taken away the bread and water left there by the Essex. This the captain did to prevent his men from deserting, which he feared they would do if they had any prospect of a temporary supply of food. This statement induced reflections in Captain Porter's mind, in regard to the tendency of British sailors to desert, a propensity carried with them even into merchant vessels, and to gratify which they often ran great risk of starvation. Even in the Galapagos islands, where food was abundant, water was so scarce, as oftentimes to be found only in the stomach of the land tortoise, and yet there were many desertions. This could only be attributed to the tyrannical system (by which the British navy was at that time governed), having crept into the merchant service, whose commanders aped the severe discipline which made the navy so unpopular with sailors. There must have been a difference between the treatment of sailors in the British and American vessels, for while the Essex remained at Charles island, one-fourth of her crew and all the prisoners who chose to go, were on liberty ashore every day. No one ever attempted to desert although they had ample opportunity to do so. When the gun was fired every man immediately repaired to the beach.

On the night of the 6th of June, the crew of the Essex were treated to a magnificent sight, by the bursting forth of a volcano on Albemarle island, which illuminated the whole horizon, and gave another proof of the fitness of the name, Enchanted islands, given to the group, by the Spaniards. There certainly was enough peculiarity, to give to superstitious mariners the idea of witchcraft; the numerous currents seemed to obey no laws, and the difficulty of a vessel getting away from them was often very great. An examination of a chart in 1875 will, perhaps, explain what was considered a difficult problem sixty years ago.

On the 8th of June, a fresh breeze sprung up and carried the Essex and her prizes northward of Abington, the northernmost island of the group, except two small ones lying about 80 miles to the N. W., and in no way affecting the currents.

Although the whaling business is now but a shadow of its former greatness, owing to the substitution of gas and vegetable oils for illuminating purposes, there are yet many vessels, principally English, which follow the pursuit for spermaceti oil, which will perhaps always be in demand for certain purposes. Whales will always be found, unless extirpated, among the Galapagos islands; and here the whaleman will resort, as of yore, in pursuit of them. Porter's directions for persons engaged in whaling are highly instructive, and will be no less so to those who in time of war may go in pursuit of them. Captain Porter never took hold of any subject with which he did not make himself as familiar as possible; whatever he engaged in, engrossed, for the time, his whole mind, and this was now the case with regard to the whale fisheries, which yielded himself and government so much profit; and the loss of which was creating so much distress to a large number of our enemies. Porter would no doubt have been as successful in catching whales as he was in catching whalers, had he taken up the former exciting business.

To show the importance that England attached to the whale fishing in the Pacific, even at a comparatively early day, we will refer to Lieut. Colnet of the royal navy, who was sent in command of the ship Rattler, for the purpose of discovering ports in which the South sea whale fishermen could refresh and refit their ships; for, to use the language of a memorial from the merchants of London to the Board of Trade, "the situation of ships employed in the whale fishery is calamitous from the scurvy and other diseases incident to those who are obliged for any length of time to keep the sea, without that refreshment which is afforded by intermediate harbors." The Spaniards about that time had admitted British vessels into their ports, for the purpose of refitting and refreshing; but the privilege was granted under so many restrictions, as almost to amount to a prohibition, as was probably intended it should. Colnet sailed from England on the 4th of January, 1793, and was absent nearly two years, visiting the Pacific coast of America as far as the gulf of California, and numerous islands, including the Galapagos. It does not appear that Colnet made any discoveries, or accomplished the object

for which he was sent, and it being necessary to stimulate seamen to embark in an enterprise of such importance as the whale fishery, the British parliament passed an act June 3, 1795, granting heavy premiums to the ships engaged in this trade which should bring into Great Britain the largest quantity of oil; and on the 13th of May, 1811, the number of ships entitled to premiums was increased to ten.

It was also enacted in order to draw Americans, who were supposed to be the most skillful in this pursuit, away from their own country and thus break up if possible the American whale fishery, that forty families of foreigners might establish themselves at Milford in Pembrokeshire, bringing with them twenty ships and their crews, which were allowed all the privileges granted to British vessels provided they complied with certain regulations. One Rotch, a New Bedford Quaker, embraced the liberal offer of the British government, and carried on the whaling business from Milford on an extensive scale, and one of this person's ships, the Montezuma, fell into the hands of Capt. Porter, which seems to have been the only loss this thrifty renegade sustained.

At the time of the Essex's cruise, it was supposed there were not less than sixty British ships engaged in the south sea whale fishery, worth, with their outfits on leaving England, $3,000,000; and on their return with their cargoes $12,000,000. As we have had occasion to remark before, many of these vessels were authorized to capture American merchant vessels, showing the determination of their government to break up our trade by one means or another.

Great Britain, whatever may be her faults, has always exercised a parental care over her subjects and commerce, in every part of the world. Her wealth and grandeur she owes to her commerce; and grateful for the advantages it has brought to her, she fosters it in every known way. She has succeeded in driving our commerce, which once nearly equalled her own, from the ocean by her liberal policy to English ship owners. This is all right as far as England is concerned, and it is, perhaps, wiser for us to sucumb than to be involved in perpetual war, since she is bound to drive us from the ocean in one way or another, by

fair means or foul. England will brook no rival to her navy or to her commerce. She depends on the former for her position, and on the latter for the means to uphold it. With fifty times her resources, we are all the time playing into her hands — occupying the humiliating position of fostering the commerce of a nation that has oppressed us more than any other upon earth, when, with proper laws, we could in ten years possess the controlling influence upon the seas.

Nothing of consequence transpired, after leaving the Galapagos islands, until the main land of Peru was sighted on the 14th June, in lat. 0° 47′ 28″ north. The vessels were spread out over the ocean on the look out for prizes, but none were seen. On the night of the 16th, land was discovered ahead, and at break of day the ships were close to the shore of the island of La Plata. Captain Porter went on shore, and found the island to be about eight miles in circumference, and of an aspect the most desolate imaginable, affording neither wood nor water in sufficient quantities to supply ships. Thinking that Mr. Downes might touch at the island, a letter was left for him in a bottle suspended from a bush, and in a conspicuous place the letters S. X. were painted on a rock, as a clue to him to search for the letter. Large numbers of sperm whales were seen near this island, all going to the N. W. close together and with great rapidity, a certain indication in the opinion of the whalers that they were lately pursued by man or by a destructive fish called the whale killer. The number of whales seen in this locality, both sperm and fin back, showed that it was a fine resort for whalers; but the island itself, though the scene of some romantic stories, had few other attractions. Here it was said Drake buried his spoils, and the buccaneers resorted to watch the Spanish fleets from the summit of the island, whence objects can be seen for a great distance.

While examining this place, the Greenwich and Atlantic were sent in chase of a sail, which proved to be a Spanish brig from Panama bound to Payta. The Spaniards, supposing our people to be English, informed them that the Nereyda a Peruvian privateer, had attacked a large American frigate, and shot away her mainmast; that the pri-

vateer had suffered much in the action, but finding the frigate too powerful and a very swift sailer, had thought it necessary, in order to effect her escape, to lighten ship by throwing her guns overboard!!

On the 19th, the ships made the island of St. Close, or Dead man's island, in the gulf of Guayaquil, and thence they proceeded to Tumbez on the south side of the gulf in about lat. 3° 20′ south. Here Captain Porter buried one of the best of his men, who was killed by a fall from aloft. His shipmates of the Essex placed over his grave the following characteristic epitaph:

"The body of John Rodgers, seaman, who departed this life June 19, 1813, aged 32 years.

Without a sigh
He bid this world adieu,
Without one pang
His fleeting spirit flew."

Soon after anchoring at Tumbez, Captain Randall of the Barclay was sent on shore to invite the governor to visit the ship, and to apologize for the Captain of the frigate's not calling, on the plea of indisposition. A supply of wood and water was here obtained but with great difficulty, owing to the violence of the surf. On the 22d, Capt. Randall returned to the fleet, accompanied by the governor of Tumbez, the collector of the port and an old gentleman, who was the governor's god-father. These people were almost in rags, yet they displayed all the haughty airs of hidalgos. Notwithstanding his ludicrous appearance, Capt. Porter received his excellency with a salute of nine guns, and during the 24 hours he stayed on board, he was treated with distinguished consideration; although the sailors had as much as they could do to keep from laughing in his face. It was desirable to be on friendly terms with these people, in order to dispose of some of the captured ships, for Captain Porter was now so hampered, that he could hardly take possession of any more prizes without weakening his own ship too much. The governor and suite received a present of one hundred dollars on leaving the Essex, with a promise of much more in case they succeeded in disposing of the ships.

Next day Captain Porter visited the town of Tumbez, a little filthy place on a narrow, shallow river. With the exception of game and fish which were abundant, the place presented few attractions. Having little confidence in the good faith of the governor, Captain Porter took the precaution to arm his boat's crew, a circumstance which he did not regret, when the governor began to question him about the condition of affairs between Spain and the United States, and seemed to be in doubt whether the war between Great Britain and the United States did not extend to the allies of the former. However, the hope of further presents and the dread of summary punishment from the Americans, overcame every other consideration, and the governor gave his new acquaintances the best reception his means afforded. The governor's wife, a handsome half breed, cooked the dinner while the party wandered around the little town, and were warmly welcomed in the huts of the inhabitants, where men, women, children, hogs, dogs and jackasses were mixed up promiscuously; but the multitude of fleas soon caused our people to beat a hasty retreat.

No Yankee that ever existed, showed greater avarice than the miserable inhabitants of Tumbez, when they heard that the Americans had some presents to dispose of. They came flocking to the governor's house, each with some trifling offering; a pair of fowls, a dozen eggs, a few oranges, or whatever else they thought could extort money.

On Captain Porter's return to the Essex in the evening, a disagreeable circumstance occurred, which caused him much embarrassment. One of the lieutenants had, on several occasions, been so much intoxicated as to compel the Captain to arrest him, and at such times his conduct had been extremely offensive to all on board; but as this officer was much esteemed for his many good qualities, his brother officers interceded and pledged themselves for his future good conduct, and Capt. Porter finally relieved him from arrest on his solemn promise of amendment. While the Captain was absent at Tumbez, this officer took advantage of the circumstance to gratify his propensity for drinking; and on the former's return, not knowing the lieutenant's condition, he sent for him, and as he did not appear went to his room, where finding him drunk and violent he placed

him under arrest; whereupon the officer attempted to shoot himself, but was finally secured. This painful incident left the ship with only one lieutenant, and it became necessary to supply the deficiency. Lieut. McKnight was therefore orderd again to the Essex, and Chaplain Adams was placed in command of the Atlantic, the sailing master was appointed acting third lieutenant, Midshipman Cowan acting 4th, and Midshipman Odenheimer acting sailing master. The younger midshipmen, mere boys, were placed as prize masters on board the captured ships, with reliable seamen to take care of them.

The governor of Tumbez at first permitted boats to go off to the ships, but soon revoked the permission in order that he might monopolize all the trade, and stationed guards at the mouth of the river to prevent the inhabitants from communicating with the Americans. Nothing was heard from the purser for several days, and the apprehensions for his safety were increased by the disappearance of the mate of one of the captured ships, who was permitted to go on shore to buy necessaries. The governor of Tumbez was subordinate to the governor of Guayaquil, and from an anonymous letter received by Capt. Porter from Guayaquil, taken in connection with other circumstances, he saw that it was a waste of time to negotiate with these people.

On the morning of the 24th, three square rigged vessels were seen standing into the bay, and as they approached a boat put off from one of the ships which proved to contain Lieut. Downes, who was received by the Essex with three hearty cheers. Downes reported that he had captured near James island three British ships; the Hector, 11 guns, 270 tons, 25 men; Catherine, 8 guns, 270 tons, 29 men; Rose, 8 guns, 270 tons, 21 men. It appears that the two latter vessels approached the Georgianna, and had no suspicion of an enemy until the Americans got on board of them. The Hector was approached late at night and was at first supposed to be a Spanish sloop of war; but when Lieut. Downes ascertained her to be British, he summoned her to surrender, which the enemy refusing to do, a shot was fired into her, doing considerable damage. The Hector now tried to escape, and declining to surrender, five broad-

sides were poured into her, which killed and wounded eight men and reduced the ship almost to the condition of a wreck. After Lieut. Downes had put a prize crew on board the Hector, his own crew amounted to only ten men, while his prisoners were seventy-five in number; and as the Rose proved a dull sailer he threw overboard her guns and cargo of sperm oil, and restored the vessel to the captain on condition that he would proceed with all the prisoners to St. Helena; the latter obliging themselves not to serve against the United States until regularly exchanged. After getting rid of the Rose Lieut. Downes cruised off the coast until he fell in with the Essex.

The fleet in Tumbez now amounted to nine vessels, and as the Atlantic was in every way superior to the Georgianna, Porter immediately mounted on her 20 guns, christened her the Essex Junior, and placed her under command of Lieut. Downes with a crew of sixty men. Midshipman Dashiel was appointed sailing master, and Chaplain Adams was placed in command of the Georgianna.

It seems strange to think of mere boys being put into such responsible positions as Porter was compelled to give his midshipmen; but they had been carefully instructed during the cruise, under the Captain's immediate supervision; their instructor in navigation and mathematics being Chaplain Adams, a proficient in those branches. The result was that every midshipman was a practical navigator, and the exciting scenes through which they passed had stamped the character of manhood on them in early life, as they had on Porter and Downes. Here was a school for heroes, and Porter must have left the impress of his character on every one who had any stamina whatever.

The Greenwich was now mounted with 20 guns, and converted into a storeship; putting on board of her all the spare provisions, cordage, &c., thus securing in one vessel articles sufficient to last the fleet for seven months.

The purser, whose long absence from the ship had caused much anxiety, now returned and explained the cause of his prolonged stay as being due to the avarice of the governor, who desired to monoplize all trade, but was too indolent to supply what the purser required.

The Essex was now enabled to get rid of her numerous prisoners, who were in every way an incumbrance. At their own request, they were put on shore at Tumbez; all their private property being restored to them even in the case of the renegade Weir. They bound themselves not to serve against the United States until regularly exchanged. About seventy-five of these prisoners had volunteered for the Essex and the cruise; and it may seem strange that Porter should have accepted their services, after so severely condemning the base conduct of Weir. The cases were, however, very different, for most of these recruits *claimed* to be Americans; and, in one instance, there could exist no doubt. This person on being asked if he was an American answered: "An faith yer honor I'm nothin' else, an' was borrn in New Yorrk before I came from ould Ireland," after which conclusive evidence he was enlisted with others of like accent. This was evidently a case of being born again.

The *bona fide* Britons excused themselves for fighting against their flag, on the ground that the war was one against the impressment of sailors, and that British sailors had suffered quite as much as others; in fact we suspect that the motto on the Essex's flag, "Free trade and sailors' rights," had a good deal to do with enticing the British sailors away from their "loyalty." It was well known that British sailors did not hesitate to fight against their flag in the war of 1812, never having received any previous encouragement to defend it. Since then, England has learned better how to treat those upon whom depends her safety; while we, it is to be feared, have gained nothing by experience; and taking no trouble to enact wise laws for the protection of our seamen, are likely, when we want the services of our best tars, in time of war, to find them in the British navy.

CHAPTER X.

ON the morning of the 30th of June, 1813, the little fleet got underway from Tumbez, and stood off the land to fall in with the easterly trade winds. All the mechanics were kept busy on board the Essex junior, building up the bulwarks and making her as much like a ship of war as possible.

On the 4th of July, the Essex junior fired a salute of seventeen guns, and the allowance of grog on board all the ships being doubled for the occasion, was more than usually relished, from the fact that all hands had been on short allowance for some time. The repairs of the Essex junior being completed, Capt. Porter directed Lieut. Downes to proceed to Valparaiso with the prizes Hector, Catherine, Policy, and Montezuma, and the American whaleship Barclay; leave the Barclay there, and sell the other vessels to the best advantage. If he thought proper, he was authorized to send the Policy with her cargo of sperm oil to the United States, as the oil could not be sold to advantage on the South American coast. The sealed instructions to be opened after leaving Valparaiso read as follows:

Sir: On leaving Valparaiso, you will scour the coast of Peru, keeping the usual distance for whalers. It will be advisable to look into the harbor of Callao, and from thence proceed to the Galapagos, searching Hood and Charles island for letters. Should you find none at either of those places, look into James island. Get clear of all prisoners if possible, and proceed to join me at the island of Chitahoo or Santa Christiana, one of the Marquesas, where you will find me at anchor, or hear from me in Resolution bay in the latter part of September and first of October. I intend there to refit my ship.

D. PORTER.

Lieut. John Downes.

After parting company with the Essex Jr., and her convoy in the longitude of the Galapagos, the course of

the Essex was shaped for those islands which Porter was induced to revisit, having received information that three well armed English ships had sailed thither from Tumbez, a fortnight before his arrival in the latter place. Having heard of the Essex being on the coast, these ships were keeping together for mutual protection, and had even expressed an intention of finding the Essex, and attacking her, which would have suited Porter exactly. The Georgianna and the store ship Greenwich remained in company with the frigate, as it was the intention to send the first named ship to the United States with a cargo of oil, so that she might arrive in the dead of winter, when the British ships of war could not remain on blockade before the northern ports.

It was with feeling quite akin to joy, when the crew of the Essex once more sighted Charles island. The Galapagos group had proved a gold mine to them, and furnished the excitement of which sailors are so fond. The islands, with their romantic nooks and feasts of turtle would be a pleasant change from stupid Tumbez, and its flea bitten population.

On the 14th, off Banks's bay, the lookout from the mast head reported three ships in sight, standing on a wind, some distance apart. The Essex immediately stood off the wind for the centre ship, while the other two stood on different tacks with a view to escape. The one of which the Essex was in chase now bore up from her, and ran off the wind, and the chase became very exciting. The inshore ship tacked to the windward of the Essex, and stood for the Georgiana and Greenwich, with the evident intention of cutting them off; whereupon the Greenwich hove to, to await the coming up of the Georgiana, and get her crew from that ship, after which she stood boldly for the stranger. The Essex had meanwhile captured the vessel of which she was in chase, which proved to be the British ship Charlton of ten guns. The Greenwich now neared the English ship, and John Bull, not thinking it proper to strike his colors to another whaler, without a struggle, gallantly opened his broadside, which was returned by the Greenwich with such effect that the enemy was obliged to haul down his flag; notwithstanding which, he attempted to run

away, the Greenwich hanging on his quarter and crippling sails and rigging with her fire. The Essex then joined in pursuit, and seeing no hope of escape the Englishman surrendered. This prize was the Seringapatam of 14 guns. About an hour afterwards, the Essex managed to overhaul the third ship, which was the New Zealander of eight guns.

Capt. Porter was particularly pleased with the capture of the Seringapatam, not only because she was reputed the finest British ship in these seas, but because her captain had the reputation of being a man of great enterprise and energy, and had shown a good deal of courage before surrendering his ship. He professed to be commissioned with letters-of-marque; had already captured an American whaleship; and would, doubtless, have inflicted great injury on our commerce if his career had not been cut short by the Essex. Although on a whaling voyage, the captain had troubled himself very little with his legitimate business, doubtless hoping to fill up his casks from captured Americans; but on being asked, by Captain Porter, to surrender his commission, he was obliged to acknowledge that he had not yet received it. As this man and all his ship's company were pirates in the eyes of the law, Captain Porter ordered them all to be put in irons; but ascertaining from the American prisoners on board the Seringapatam that they had been well treated, and satisfied that the captain was alone to blame, all were liberated from confinement with the exception of that individual. The capture of the three vessels was very creditable to all concerned; the officers and crew of the Greenwich, in particular, showing great bravery in running down, and attacking a much stronger vessel.

The Essex now bore up with her prizes for James island, but was prevented from making port, by the strength of the north west current, and finding himself hampered with the Charlton, Porter, after taking her guns out, gave her up to her captain on condition of his landing all the prisoners, 48 in number, at Rio de Janeiro. To this contract, both the captain of the Charlton and of the New Zealander, bound themselves by oath. The mates and sailors, however, expressed their determination not to go into any port where they were likely to meet a British

ship of war, so great was their horror of impressment; and they requested Capt Porter to allow them boats, that they might take their chances of reaching shore; a petition he was obliged to refuse, lest it might be said he had turned them adrift in mid ocean. They then requested to remain, and volunteered to ship on board the Essex, but the Captain declined their proposition. They finally became so turbulent, at the prospect of being placed once more on board a British vessel, that Capt. Porter had to threaten them with coercive measures, in order to restore the master of the Charlton's authority; but, after reasoning with the men on the impropriety of their conduct, like all sailors when properly appealed to, they went on board quite cheerfully, with many wishes for the welfare of the Essex and her crew, and three hearty cheers at parting, a striking commentary on the strictures of the British press of the day, against Captain Porter.

The Seringapatam was a fast sailer, and had originally been built as a ship of war for Tippoo Saib; in a few days she was completely equipped for service, with twenty-two guns mounted on her. She was placed in charge of Mr. Terry, master's mate; and the New Zealander in charge of Purser Shaw, both with instructions not to separate from the Essex. All the different grades of officers, except the surgeon, had now been in charge of prizes; commanding officers were as plenty as generals in an army corps, and fleet sailing was perhaps better understood and practiced then than it has been since in the United States navy.

After bothering with the eccentric currents of the Galapagos for some days, Capt. Porter determined to send the Georgiana to the United States with her cargo of oil; and the lieutenant who had been placed under arrest was, at the solicitation of his brother officers, relieved from arrest and placed in command. Although the terms of enlistment of many of the Essex's crew had expired, few of them desired to return home before the frigate; but a crew was finally made up, and the prize sailed for the United States on the 25th of July.

While working in among the islands, a sail was made early in the morning — a ship under three topsails, with a fresh breeze on a wind, while the Essex and prizes

were lying becalmed with a strong current setting them towards Redondo. Sail was made to chase the stranger, but she was soon lost sight of; and the whole attention, of Captain and crew, was occupied to prevent the Essex from drifting upon the island, where the sea was breaking furiously against its inaccessible rocks, threatening the ship with certain destruction should she be carried on shore. But, by working the drags vigorously and the assistance of a breeze that sprung up, the ship was at length out of danger. Early next morning, the cry "sail ho!" was heard, again, and by aid of the glass a ship was seen standing on a wind to the N. E. towards the Essex. At 9.30, she was directly to windward and distant seven miles, when evidently seeing that her chaser was a frigate, she hoisted American colors and endeavored to escape. Every effort was now made to come up with the stranger, which was evidently an English whaler; the wind becoming light drags were used until the crew were broken down. The distance between the ships had diminished to four miles, when the stranger commenced to tow with all his boats, with the evident intention of running the ship on to Abington point, which was not far distant. Two boats were accordingly sent from the Essex, ahead of the strange ship, with a few good marksmen to drive the towing boats in, but with strict orders to make no attempt on her, as Capt. Porter felt that it was unnecessary to risk the lives of his men, when the capture of the enemy's vessel was so certain without it. The boats of the stranger were soon driven in, when she opened fire with two guns from the forecastle, and the frigate's boats had some difficulty in avoiding the shot. The stranger had, in the meantime, hoisted British colors. By four o'clock, both vessels were becalmed, not more than three and a half miles apart; and as anything was preferable in the minds of the sailors to working the drags, they were greatly delighted when Porter gave orders to hoist out the boats and carry the enemy by boarding. The latter seeing so formidable a force approaching, fired a few shots, which failing to check their course, the British flag was hauled down. The boats were now but three quarters of a mile from the stranger, when a fresh breeze sprung up from the eastward, and the enemy

again hoisted his colors and made all sail to escape, firing on the two boats first sent from the Essex as they passed; and at sunset he was hull down. The frigate lay becalmed and the boats continued the chase, in the hope that it would fall calm again. After sunset a breeze sprung up, the boats were overtaken and the chase renewed, the British vessel's course was followed during the night but without avail, for at daylight no sail was in sight.

The stranger was believed to have been the ——, as no other British whale ship was known to be on the coast except the Comet of 20 guns, fitted out both for whaling and for capturing American vessels. The officers and crew consoled themselves for this disappointment, with the reflection that this was the first vessel that had escaped them; but, in spite of this philosophy, it is to be feared that they were a little spoiled by their previous successes.

On the morning of the 4th of August the Essex anchored with her prizes in the harbor of James island, in order to make the repairs that had become necessary by knocking about the ocean so long under press of sail. Up to this time (nearly ten months), the Essex had not cost the government anything for provisions, stores or equipment, having lived entirely upon the enemy; to say nothing of the total destruction of the British whalefishery in the Pacific, and the capture of several ships that would have proved very disastrous to American commerce.

The Seringapatam was now painted to look like the Essex, after which, the appearance of the latter was entirely changed, and the Greenwich was made to look like a sloop of war; Capt. Porter hoping in future to derive some advantage over the enemy by means of this deception.

At James island, it was discovered that the Essex's powder had become damaged, and it had all to be taken ashore to dry and sift it. It also became necessary to take nearly all the powder from the Seringapatam to supply the deficiency on board the Essex. It was fortunate that the damage was rectified in time, as in case of meeting with an enemy, the ship would have been placed in an unpleasant predicament. Fourteen tons weight of tortoises were now put on board the Essex, and a corresponding amount on board the other vessels. They were piled up

in the hold to use when required, and not needing food or water were an exceedingly convenient description of live stock to take to sea.

The Galapagos islands deserve a more extended account, than the limits of this work will allow. They seem to have been placed by nature, as a depot of supplies for wanderers over the Pacific. The buccaneers resorted to them, without the least fear of surprise, to indulge in their ferocious revelry; and it adds much to the interest we feel in the Galapagos, to conjecture that the gold and silver, plundered from the churches and from Spanish merchants, may yet be stored away in secret hiding places on those lonely shores. Although there seems to be very little fresh water in the islands (and the crew of the Essex were never able to find permanent springs), yet the stomachs of the tortoises frequently contained upwards of a gallon.

A tragical event took place during their stay at James island. Lieut. Cowan, a promising young officer, was killed in a duel and buried on the spot where he fell. His death was much regretted by Capt. Porter, who, in his journal, makes some feeling remarks on the subject, and strongly in deprecation of the barbarous custom by which the services of a valuable officer were lost to his country, at a time when they were most needed. Porter caused the following inscription to be placed over the grave of the unfortunate officer:

Sacred to the Memory

OF

Lieut. John S. Cowan of the U. S. Frigate Essex,

Who died here anno domini 1813,

aged 21.

His loss is ever to be regretted by his country and mourned by his friends and brother officers.

Previous to sailing, Capt. Porter left at the "post office," with a desire to mislead the enemy, a letter giving a dismal account of the ravages of the scurvy on board the frigate, and of being compelled to burn their prizes for want of men to man them; together with a long list of imaginary dead men for the benefit of John Bull. No doubt some British whaler got hold of this precious docu-

ment, and exulted greatly at the misfortunes of the Yankee frigate; although he must have wondered where all the dead were buried. To a matter of fact person these misrepresentations may seem wrong, but it is hardly necessary to remind our readers that everything of this kind is "fair in war," and a strict adherence to truth is not always practicable.

On the 22d of August the Essex and her prizes anchored in Banks's bay, and the latter were directed to proceed to the cove inside Narborough with the following orders, which will explain the arrangements made for their conduct, and the future designs of Capt. Porter.

U. S. Frigate Essex,
Bank's Bay, 21st August, 1813.

Sir: You will proceed to the cove with the Greenwich and moor her agreeably to the instructions already given you; the crew of the Greenwich will be kept complete for the protection of the other vessels; and, in the event of being attacked, you will call on the other prize masters and their men to assist on board your ship; but it is expected you will only act on the defensive. Should I not appear in six weeks from the time of my leaving this, you will proceed to Valparaiso in company with the Seringapatam after the articles of value are taken from the New Zealander and that ship is burnt. If, however, Lieut. Downes should appear before the expiration of six weeks from the time of my leaving this, you will please deliver him the enclosed letter, which contains instructions for the guidance of his conduct respecting the disposal of the prizes.

I must recommend your keeping constantly on guard with a look out from a suitable point. Let the ships be ready for sea on the shortest notice, and suffer no guns to be fired, no fires at night, or any other practices by which you may be discovered.

Should I appear off with an English red ensign hoisted union down, at the fore, you will send a boat on board the Essex. If the same signal is made at the main, it will be for the Seringapatam and New Zealander to send their boats for their crews, and you will please to furnish them assistance for the purpose if necessary. Should you leave the cove before I arrive you will bury a bottle containing a letter in some suitable spot near the landing place at the head of the cove and cut in the rocks immediately over it the letters S. X. in order that I may be enabled to find it.

I need not inform you how important it is that the prizes should not fall into the hands of an enemy. Your situation will render their destruction (in the last extremity) very easy. I would re-

commend to you to have as many boats as may be necessary for the escape of the crews, in constant readiness for service, and a sufficiency of provisions and water &c., &c., provided for them at the shortest notice; and, in the event of the necessity of taking to them, I would advise your proceeding to Charles' island as the most likely place of meeting with the Essex Junior or Essex and in case you should not fall in with either, it appears the most likely place for you to take by surprise some British vessel. Trusting much to your discretion,

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obt. servt.

Lieutenant John M. Gamble, D. PORTER.
Prize master of the ship Greenwich.

Similar orders were given to Mr. Shaw and to Mr. Terry of the Seringapatam, and a letter was left for Lieut. Downes directing him if Capt. Porter did not arrive by the 2d of October, to proceed to Valparaiso with the prizes under his convoy, pursuing there the course which seemed to him most proper.

On the 24th of August Porter got under way, and cruised about the islands until the 8th of September, hoping to fall in with Lieut. Downes or some English ships; but on the 8th, leaving a letter for Downes on Chatham island, he started on a cruise to windward. At daylight on the 14th, a ship was discovered from the mast head apparently lying to under easy sail, and as she was directly to windward it was not deemed advisable to excite her alarm by making much sail. The fore and main royal yards were consequently sent down, the masts housed, the ports shut in and the frigate made to look as much as possible like a whaler. In the mean time the Essex kept plying to windward towards the stranger, while the latter was drifting fast down upon the frigate. Capt. Porter now made a signal, such as had been agreed upon between the captain of the New Zealander and a certain Captain William Porter, should they meet; thinking this might be the whaleship commanded by the last named individual. At one P. M., when the two ships were about four miles apart, the stranger suddenly cast off from the whale to which she was fastened and set all sail to escape; but by four o'clock the Essex was within range, and after firing 6 or 8 shot at

her, she bore down under the frigate's lee and hauled down the British colors.

The prize proved to be the letter-of-marque Sir Andrew Hammond, pierced for 20 guns and with 12 mounted, carrying 36 men and commanded by the identical William Porter whose signal had been made; but the most agreeable circumstance attending this capture, to those on board the Essex, was the discovery that the Hammond was the ship that had led them such a dance before, and finally escaped out of their hands. The Essex had so altered her appearance that those on board the Hammond never for a moment suspected that she was the vessel that had chased them before. The Hammond had several thousand dollars worth of blubber on hand, and Capt. Porter, in order not to lose it, put a crew on board who were accustomed to whaling, in charge of the efficient Chaplain Adams. In order that the blubber might be more easily converted into oil, he directed Mr. Adams to repair to the harbor where the other prizes lay, called by him Port Rendezvous, while the Essex stood through the sound into Banks's bay.

Lieut. Gamble now boarded the Essex, in his boat, and informed Capt. Porter that he had heard several guns fired to the northward the day before; and that, since the departure of the Essex, a ship had three times visited Banks's bay. The ship was undoubtedly the Hammond; but it was more difficult to account for the guns and for the carcase of a fresh killed whale which had lately floated into the bay. The Essex again put to sea, but finding no vessels, beat up for Port Rendezvous and anchored among her prizes. All hands were glad to welcome the Essex, and the arrival of another prize added to their satisfaction. They had begun to be heartily tired of a place where the only incidents to vary the scene were the cries of the sea birds, and the melancholy howling of the seals. They missed the master spirit of their adventures, and that regular employment and strict discipline which in a ship of war is essential to comfort.

Lieut. Downes was now daily expected, and Porter only awaited his arrival to leave forever the Enchanted islands, to proceed to the Washington group. The Essex was now

completely overrun with rats, which threatened to eat up everything on board; they had already done great damage, and the ship could only be rid of them by removing everything from her, for which and for other purposes a good harbor must be sought.

About this time occurred the first trouble that had been experienced with the crew of the Essex, since leaving the United States; and, like most of the trouble in this world, it was due to over indulgence in ardent spirits. The Hammond had, when captured, a large supply of high proof spirits on board, and as the men had long been on short allowance, this accession to their ration was more than they could stand; so that on serving out the first allowance many of the men were carried helpless to their hammocks. Even diluting the grog did not wholly cure the evil; but as the men committed no further improprieties in consequence of the effect of the liquor, they were allowed considerable latitude. One Rynard, a quarter master, had been four years on board the Essex and was suspected of being always at work stirring up others to complain, though he did not dare to come forward himself, until the allowance of rum was reduced on the coast of Brazil. His conduct then showed him to be a rogue, and the Captain was now apprehensive that this man might exercise a mischievous influence over his crew, many of whose times had expired; knowing, as he did, that sailors are, like children, easily influenced for good or evil by anyone with whom they may be thrown in contact. Rynard had, under the influence of liquor, committed the grossest outrages and been most insubordinate and disrespectful to the Captain, who had him placed on the quarter-deck until he should get sober, where his meals were sent him, only to be thrown overboard in presence of the officers, and he finally became so mutinous that he was placed in irons. Rynard treated his confinement with derision, saying his time was out and he wanted his discharge. The Captain determined to grant this man's wish, and his papers were therefore made out at once, and he was sent on board the Seringapatam, until she should have an opportunity of landing him in some port. Rynard's discharge produced a remarkably good effect, restoring the crew to their

senses; and those who had shown themselves most discontented, now set the example of good behavior. There was never any further trouble of this kind, and thus, a case which threatened to lead to serious results, was so judiciously treated that it produced in the end an excellent result.

On the 30th, the Essex Jr. was signalled from a flagstaff erected on the summit of a hill near the landing, and Lieut. Downes was soon alongside the Essex in his boat. The Essex Jr. brought the news of Mr. Madison's reëlection to the presidency, and the most gratifying accounts of the success of the navy in every instance where our ships had encountered vessels of equal force. Letters from the American consul at Buenos Ayres, informed Capt. Porter that on the 5th of July, the British frigate Phœbe 36, and the sloops of war Raccoon and Cherub, each of 24 guns, had sailed from Rio de Janeiro for the Pacific in pursuit of the Essex. Several British merchant ships were also expected at Valparaiso with valuable cargoes, and Lieut. Downes reported having left one in that port when he sailed. The Policy had been sent to the United States, and the other prizes safely moored in Valparaiso. The only British whaleship now known in the Pacific was the Comet, and she was laid up in Concepcion; so Porter determined to proceed to the Marquesas, and try and capture the British ship left by Downes at Valparaiso, which would no doubt stop there on her way to India. On the 2d of October, the Essex got underway and stood out to sea.

Prior to leaving, Rynard, the man whose discharge from service has been mentioned, was, at his own most urgent request seconded by Lieut. Downes, placed on the books of the Essex Jr., as a seaman, for Porter would not consent to have him on board the frigate again, under any circumstances. This episode of Rynard is mentioned to illustrate Porter's method of dealing with seamen, whose character he thoroughly understood, under the most difficult circumstances. He was thousands of miles from his country, with a crew liable to be so influenced by bad example, as to endanger the success of the cruise and even the safety of the vessel. Some of his crew were foreigners, with no attachment to the flag beyond the hope of sharing in the

prize money, accruing from the numerous captures. This was the only case of the kind that occurred; and it was checked, not by severe punishment, which it really merited, but by that cool, judicious conduct, which should characterize a naval commander, and which is so necessary in dealing with sailors.

Captain Porter had now broken up, completely, the important British whale fishery in the Pacific; all the vessels were captured, except the Comet, and she was laid up. By these captures the enemy had lost nearly three millions of dollars, and in a shape that would go farther towards touching the English heart than if the same amount had been taken in ships of war. Three hundred and sixteen seamen had been paroled, not to serve against the United States until regularly exchanged, and six letters-of-marque had been prevented from carrying destruction to our whaling interests. But two of our whaleships had been captured, and that occured before the arrival of the Essex. As soon as the arrival of the frigate in the Pacific was known, the American whaleships, which had taken refuge in South American ports, immediately put to sea and recommenced their operations; and Lieut. Downes gave four of these ships, with full cargoes, convoy from Valparaiso, when he left that port, until they considered themselves safe from British cruisers.

The policy of the British in arming their merchant ships with authority to cruise against the commerce of an enemy may have answered very well for the time, but in future is likely to react upon Great Britain. Weak nations are obliged to adopt the system of privateering to protect themselves against the strong; and it is a privilege they should never surrender: but there is a degree of infamy in setting one merchant ship to prey upon another, which no circumstances can justify. It seems strange that Great Britain, in the 19th century, should ever have tolerated such a system of legalized piracy, which little accords with her reputation for justice and humanity.

CHAPTER XI.

At the time when the Essex was running her career in the Pacific, the numerous groups of islands scattered throughout the great ocean were very imperfectly known, and their inhabitants as yet uncontaminated by the vices of civilization, were a far more interesting people than at the present day. The islands were, then, merely stopping places for whalers, or vessels on their way to the N. W. coast, or to India, in search of wood and water, and such refreshments as the country afforded. The commanders of these vessels were generally more interested in the objects of their voyage, than in the savages of the South sea, whom they considered of no importance, and with whom they had as little intercourse as possible in order to guard against their treachery. From the visits and surveys of government expeditions, and from the missionaries who have labored among these heathen for so many years, we now possess a very accurate knowledge of the subject. The islanders have changed very much within the last sixty years, and with the loss of much of their savage character they have laid aside many noble traits while retaining all their original cunning. The islands which were formerly considered of no value, except as stopping places for traders, are now attracting the attention of the great powers, which have great commercial interests to protect, and require depots for their ships of war, from whence they can swoop down upon their enemies, or gather for protection their numerous merchant vessels; they are also stopping places for lines of steamers, which are circling the earth in every direction. The early accounts then of these islands, when written by persons of observation, should be exceedingly interesting to us of the present day.

After leaving the Galapagos, abandoning his intention to search for a group of islands said to have been discovered by the Spaniards near the equator, but which have since

been found not to exist, Captain Porter steered direct for the Washington islands, sending the Essex Jr. to the Marquesas, in the hope of intercepting there the English ship bound to India, which that officer had left in Valparaiso.

The little squadron pursued its way through the smooth ocean, with pleasant weather, with nothing to vary the monotony of the voyage; and as it was necessary to prevent, if possible, that listlessness and apathy into which men on ship board are too apt to fall, Capt. Porter issued the following communication to his crew, and those who know the disposition of sailors may readily imagine the effect which it produced.

"We are bound to the Western islands with two objects in view: First, that we may put the ship in a suitable condition to enable us to take advantage of the most favorable season for our return home: Secondly, I am desirous that you should have some relaxation and amusement after being so long at sea, as from your late good conduct you deserve it.

We are going among a people much addicted to thieving, treacherous in their proceedings, whose conduct is governed only by fear and regulated by views to their interest. We must put nothing in their power; be ever on our guard, and prevent by every means that can be used, disputes and difficulties with them; we must treat them with kindness but never trust them, and be most vigilant where there is the greatest appearance of friendship. Let the fate of the many who have been cut off by the savages of the South sea islands be a useful warning to us.

It will require much discretion and good management to keep up a friendly intercourse with them; and in the regulations that I shall lay down for this object, I shall expect the hearty concurrence of every person under my command.

Disputes are most likely to arise from traffic with them: therefore to prevent these I shall appoint a vessel for the express purpose of trading, and shall select an officer and four men to conduct all exchanges; and every other person is positively forbid to traffic with the natives, except through the persons so selected to conduct the trade.

No canoes or male natives will be permitted to come along-side the Essex, or any other vessel, except the trading ship, on any account, unless it may be the chiefs whom I may designate. And if every person exerts themselves to carry on the work of the ship, as well as to enforce the above regulations and such others as I may

from time to time adopt, I shall allow you time to amuse yourselves on shore; but this indulgence shall cease the moment I discover any relaxation in vigilance or industry.

(Signed) D. PORTER.

U. S. Frigate Essex, Oct., 1813.

This note, after being read at the mainmast, was handed round among the crew and great were the anticipations of the sailors of the pleasures that were in store for them. It will be seen by the above, that although disposed to communicate familiarly with his men, yet Capt. Porter was determined to indulge them in a way that should not weaken the discipline of the ship, and thus risk her destruction.

At noon on the 23d of October, 1813, land was discovered bearing S. W., and supposed to be the Hood's island of Captain Cook. It was a lump of rock destitute of verdure and about three miles in circuit. After making this island, which is the most northerly of the Marquesas, Porter hove to for the prizes to come up, and then steered to the northward for the island of Rooahooga, one of the Washington group (about 600 miles N. E. of Tahiti), discovered by Capt. Ingraham of the brig Hope of Boston, April 19th, 1791, and called the Washington islands by Capt. Roberts, of the Jefferson of Boston, who visited them March 6th, 1793.

On the morning of the 24th the island of Rooahooga, called by Porter Adams's island, was seen, resembling at a distance the desolate Galapagos; but, on a nearer approach, beautiful valleys watered by running streams and dotted with habitations, with groups of natives on the hills inviting them to land, gave our voyagers a very different idea of the place, and made them long to set their feet upon that fertile shore. A canoe shortly approached the Essex containing eight natives, one of whom seated in the bow had his head ornamented with yellow leaves. No persuasions could induce them to come on board, although they were offered pieces of iron, fish hooks and other articles which savages value. By means of a Tahitan on board Capt. Porter was enabled to communicate with the islanders, and they were finally induced to accept some small presents, which were let down to them over the stern in a

bucket; which they reciprocated by sending up a few fish and a belt made of cocoanut fibres ornamented with hog's teeth. They frequently repeated the word Taya (friend), and invited the Americans on shore; assuring them by the most expressive gesticulations, that they should receive a hearty welcome. These islanders were entirely naked, but their bodies were marked in every direction with fanciful lines of tattooing. They were much attracted by the sight of some whale's teeth, which is a remarkable feature in the character of all the islanders of the Pacific, and even as late as 1874, one of the chiefs of the Tonga islands who had made a treaty with an officer of the navy, sent a whale's tooth to the president as the highest mark of his esteem.

By this time numbers of other canoes had put off from the coves with which the coast was indented, but none of them could be induced to come alongside, until at length the Captain ordered two boats to be manned (into one of which he entered), and proceeded towards the natives, directing the Tahitan interpreter to inform them that the visitors were friends who wished to purchase provisions, and that those in the boats would proceed to the shore and remain as hostages, while they visited the ship. Accordingly part of the natives went on board the frigate but the greater number followed the Americans to the shore, where the inhabitants now began to assemble from all quarters armed with clubs and spears. Although both his boats' crews were well armed, yet Capt. Porter did not think it advisable to put it in the power of the natives to attack him; and, consequently, directed Lieut. McKnight, who was in charge of one of the boats, to lie outside the heavy line of breakers which beat upon the beach, while he went close in with his own boat, and trafficked with the natives for their ornaments and fruit; in a few moments the latter laid aside their weapons and swam off in swarms to the boat loaded with provisions, and almost crazy with excitement at the idea of procuring such a valuable article as a piece of iron hoop, in exchange for such a trifle as a good sized pig.

These savages seemed to be very much like children: in one instance two fish hooks were given to divide among

three of them to see how they would act. They all agreed to the exchange, but on the hooks being delivered one of them ran off with his bread fruit in high glee at the trick he had played, probably thinking it would be easier to divide two hooks between two persons than among three; the others pretended to be angry, and signified to the Captain that he should pursue and beat the offender, which they were directed to do themselves, and they went through the motions pretty much as young children would have done under the circumstances.

Notwithstanding the friendly intercourse that was kept up, it was evident that the natives were very suspicious of the Americans, always approaching the boat with awe and agitation. Their want of confidence produced a corresponding suspicion on the other side, and even if the surf had not made landing difficult it would have been deemed prudent to keep off the shore. One native, bolder than his companions, tried to obtain possession of a pistol which he saw in the bottom of the boat, and it was with difficulty he could be made to understand that his wishes would not be gratified. Pointing the pistol at him instead of frightening him produced the greatest joy, as he immediately stretched out his hand to receive it; whence it was supposed that the natives were ignorant of fire arms.

After remaining with these people for a couple of hours, Captain Porter visited a small cove to the leeward, where were assembled about fifty natives, including three women. Some of the men were highly ornamented with plumes of black feathers, large gorgets, and a kind of white cloak made of the fibres of the cocoanut tree. Each held a handsome white fan, as a mark of distinction, and had tufts of human hair bound round their wrists, their ancles and loins. They had large white oval ornaments apparently intended as false ears, with shells and whale's teeth hung around their necks, presenting altogether a picturesque and elegant appearance. Capt. Porter gave the person, whom he supposed to be the chief, to understand that his object was to trade, showing at the same time some fish hooks, hoops, and knives, the sight of which seemed to fill the natives with joy, and they pointed out as their chief an ancient individual, entirely naked with the exception of a piece of

cloth about his loins, and a fillet of palm leaves about his head. Upon a signal from this person the other natives threw aside their dress and ornaments and swam to the boat where each was given a small present of inestimable value to them, no doubt, as they offered to give their women in return, two of whom were handsome young girls.

The Americans were much impressed with the noble appearance of these islanders, the men being remarkable for their strength and stature, and for forms which emulate those of the Greek sculptors. One of the chiefs measured 6 feet 8 inches in height, and another was said to be six inches taller even than this. The elaborate tattooing of the Washington islanders is perhaps the finest in the world, but is generally confined to the men; the women contenting themselves with a bracelet or two, or other simple ornament tattooed on their arms or elsewhere. The tattooing of a female, particularly if she has a rich husband, is generally made an occasion of rejoicing; a pig is killed for the entertainment of the invited guests, and warm congratulations extended to the wife for the affection shown by her devoted husband.

The Americans, thus far, could not complain of their reception by the natives; and any distrust shown by the latter, was due, no doubt, to their experience of treachery at the hands of early navigators.

On their return to the ship, the sailors had wonderful stories to relate of the great dignitaries and beautiful houris they had seen on shore; and great was the expectations raised when they should find a harbor where they could let go their anchor. The natives who visited the ship were so delighted with their reception, that one of them said he longed to get on shore that he might dance; which seems to be, the world over, the usual mode of testifying extreme delight.

The goats, sheep, dogs, and other animals, attracted great attention from the natives, but the Galapagos turtles were universally allowed to be the most extraordinary of quadrupeds, and as is their custom when they wish to feast their eyes on some unusual sight, the visitors stretched themselves at full length on the deck, and gazed intently on the unwieldy creatures. Their fondness for a recumbent position

could hardly be taken as a proof of indolence, since these islanders are capable of the most extraordinary exertions in paddling their canoes, and climbing about the rocks and hills. The young girls seen at Adams's island were well formed and handsome, with smooth skins and a complexion not darker than our American brunettes; but this rose colored view of the situation may have been due to the fact that our people had not seen any women for a long time, and sailors just from sea look upon all women as angels. Although these women were as destitute of clothing as the inhabitants of Paradise, yet their actions were entirely modest; and if they seemed to sacrifice this latter quality in being presented to strangers in a state of nudity, it must be remembered that they came forward with evident reluctance, and, no doubt, in compliance with their native virtue, hospitality.

On the approach of evening, the Essex and her prizes made sail for the island of Nookaheevah, thirty miles distant from Adams's island, and next morning came to anchor in 30 fathoms water, at the mouth of Port Anna Maria, called by Porter Massachusetts bay, a fine harbor four miles in depth and wide enough for a frigate to manœuvre in. Here the Essex awaited a favorable wind to enter the bay with her prizes.

Soon after anchoring, a canoe approached the frigate containing three white men, one of whom was tattooed all over the body, and had nothing but a piece of cloth around his loins. As these men were supposed to be deserters from some vessel, they were forbidden to come along-side, or to hold any intercourse with the crew; and Capt. Porter was much vexed at the prospect of having to deal with the sort of characters he supposed these men to be, foreseeing nothing but trouble from their influence. The white men paddled back to the shore, joined by all the natives who were intending to come on board. The natives now began to assemble on the beach in considerable numbers, armed with spears, and war clubs; and the captain saw that he had been rather too hasty in dealing with the white men, since it was possible they might frustrate all his intentions of establishing friendly relations with the natives; and to arrange matters as soon as possi-

ble, he proceeded to the scene in person with four boats well manned and armed.

On landing, no person was to be seen on the beach, except a white man who came forward and reported himself as Mr. John M. Maury, midshipman in the United States navy. This was a strange place to fall in with a midshipman, but the latter explained it by saying that he had left the United States on furlough with Lieut. Lewis for Canton, from which place he had sailed for the island to procure sandal wood. Lewis, after procuring his cargo, had returned to Canton, leaving Mr. Maury to collect a fresh stock. Lewis should have been back two months before, but the news of the war with England (brought by the Essex) destroyed all hope of seeing him again, and Maury applied to be taken on board the frigate. The naked white man was one Wilson, an Englishman, who had been many years in the Marquesas, and had become an Indian in all respects except color. He was apparently a good-hearted fellow, whose only failing was fondness for rum; and his knowledge of the language, manners, &c., of the natives made him exceedingly useful to the captain of the Essex; and all subsequent interviews, conversations, &c., with the natives were carried on through this man as interpreter.

On Captain Porter walking up to a group of natives, unattended, all their apprehensions seemed to be removed; the women now came forward, and all the islanders were much pleased with the music of the drum, and the regular movements of the marines, who were exercised on the beach for their benefit. The soldiers were looked upon as spirits, or different from ordinary men; and though the firing of the muskets caused the women to stop their ears, yet they did not seem terrified. The distribution of knives and fish hooks excited pleasure, but nothing was offered in return as at Adams's island.

The Captain was now informed that the Happahs, a tribe living in the island beyond the mountains, had made war on the Nookaheevans and had destroyed many of their houses, plantations, and bread fruit trees; and in order to ingratiate himself in their good graces he sent word to the Happahs that if they dared to make a hostile incursion

into the valley while the Americans remained, that he would send a body of men to chastise them; but that the Happahs could come and trade freely with the Americans, who would take care that they were not molested by the people of the valley. Captain Porter then informed the valley people (who were much pleased with his action towards the Happahs), that he wanted nothing but what he was willing to pay for; that the Americans were their friends and would protect them, and that they must leave their weapons at home in order not to be mistaken for hostile Happahs; for all who appeared in arms would be treated as enemies.

While all this pow-wow was in progress, a handsome young woman of about 18 years appeared upon the scene. She was of fair complexion and neatly attired, her skin and glossy black hair anointed with cocoa nut oil, her carriage majestic; and her whole appearance striking in the extreme. This was Piteenee, granddaughter to Gattanewa the chief of the valley, and she received the attentions which Capt. Porter thought it necessary to show her, with the hauteur of a princess; yet, notwithstanding her royal airs, this lady soon after formed a connexion with one of the officers of the Essex, which lasted as long as the Americans remained in the island, though with little fidelity on her part. It must not be supposed that all the women were as handsome as Piteenee, many of them are described as undersized, awkward and ugly, so that a stranger can hardly realize that they belong to the same race as the tall and fine looking men who are everywhere met with on the islands. There is a striking difference between the upper and lower classes. The aristocracy have fairer complexions, and take great pains to prevent being sun burned; but when this misfortune does overtake them, they have a process of bleaching their skins, which is so tedious that nothing but the most overweening vanity could tempt them to make use of it. A Marquesas woman, after undergoing this process, and assuming her costume of bark cloth and adorning her hair with plumes, and her hands, arms and feet with ornaments, presents a very striking appearance.

Captain Porter was informed that Gattanewa, the chief,

was holding out against the Happahs, having two hill forts garrisoned, which commanded the passes leading into the valley. The manner of fortifying, was to place close together, on end, the bodies of large trees, forming a breastwork that would defy almost anything except artillery, and from behind these breastworks the defenders showered heavy stones upon an attacking force.

Captain Porter now returned to the Essex to await the return of the chief, who had been notified of his arrival; and, while waiting his coming, the ship was warped into the bay and anchored at the bottom of the harbor within half a mile of the white sandy beach.

The Essex junior hove in sight while these operations were progressing, and Lieut. Downes reported that he had not heard anything of the British ship, of which he went in pursuit, and that she had probably returned home to escape capture. Next day all the prizes and the Essex junior were moored near the frigate in one of the best of harbors.

After the ship was moored, the natives flocked to the beach in large numbers, the women waving their white cloaks as an invitation to visit them. Captain Porter found it impossible to resist the importunities with which he was beset, and consequently the boats were sent on shore and were immediately filled with women, who insisted on visiting the ship. While on board, the natives were presented with fish hooks, pieces of iron hoops, and glass bottles — articles to them of inestimable value — and they went on shore highly pleased with the gallantry of their nautical admirers. As for the sailors, they were as much delighted as the natives, and the ship was a scene of merriment such as is very uncommon in a man-of-war. It was found that, of all things on earth, these natives chiefly valued whales' teeth; and it is asserted, that for ten of these a ship could have been loaded with sandal wood at Nookaheevah, a cargo worth, in Canton, nearly a million of dollars.

While deliberating on a place for an encampment prior to commencing repairs on the Essex, Gattanewa arrived from the mountains and was presented with a fine English sow, by Captain Porter, an attention which was highly

appreciated by the chief, who was anxious to improve the island breed of swine. When Gattanewa came on board the Essex, Capt. Porter was astonished to see an infirm old fellow of about seventy, and without other covering than a cloth around his loins, and a palm leaf tied about his head. He was as black as a negro, from tattooing, and his skin was peeling off from the quantity of *kava* (an intoxicating root) in which he indulged himself. Wishing to impress the chief with an idea of his power, Captain Porter had all the crew assembled, and the great guns fired, but his highness paid little attention to the proceedings, beyond stopping his ears at the report. In fact, this distinguished man was very drunk with *kava*, and was only roused from his lethargy when the Captain showed him some of the precious whales' teeth; and he was made unspeakably happy when Porter presented him with one of those valuable articles, saying that there was nothing else in the ship that he wanted. Before going on shore Gattanewa exchanged names with Captain Porter, and begged his assistance in the war against the Happahs; but the Captain informed him, that unless the Happahs were the aggressors he should not interfere with them. This did not satisfy Gattanewa, who told him that the Happahs had cursed his mother's bones, and that the Captain and himself having exchanged names, his mother was now the Captain's mother also.

The chief, on his return to the shore, sent off several boat loads of hogs, cocoa nuts, and plantains, which were distributed among the different vessels.

The ship was now hauled close into the beach, an enclosure was formed on shore with casks, inside of which a large tent was pitched, and everything was removed to the shore preparatory to making the necessary repairs. In the meantime, the predatory Happahs, in spite of the warning they had received from Captain Porter, made another incursion into the valley and destroyed some two hundred bread fruit trees, but on the firing of guns from the frigate they retreated to the mountains. Soon after this event, the Happahs sent word to Capt. Porter that as the Americans were all cowards, they should soon visit his camp and carry off the sails; and, thinking it highly probable that the

natives might attempt to put their threat into execution, he ordered one-fourth of all his available force to be landed, every evening, as a guard for the camp; a tent being erected for his own use at a point where he could see all that was going on. With a view to frighten the Happahs and prevent any more of their troublesome incursions, Capt. Porter determined to give them some idea of the power of his guns; and he informed Gattanewa that if he would set his people at work to carry a six pounder to the top of the mountains, a force should be sent along to work it and drive away his enemies. To this the chief readily consented, and the gun was accordingly landed and fired a few times over the water, for the edification of the native spectators. They were astonished at the length of time the shot remained in mid air, and delighted at seeing the ball skip along the surface of the water; and after embracing and fondling the gun for some time, they slung it between two poles, and, to the surprise of the Americans, trudged off with perfect ease to the mountain.

Meanwhile, repairs were busily prosecuted on board the Essex; the ship was caulked, and a new supply of water casks set up, the old ones being unfit for use; everybody was kept busy until 4 P. M. each day, after which the time was devoted to amusement and repose, and one-fourth of the crew allowed to remain on shore until daylight next morning. An oven was constructed on shore and fresh bread served out daily to all hands. Everything was progressing favorably, but the salt provisions were nearly expended, and fish could not be caught here with a seine, nor could a sufficient quantity of hogs be procured from the natives, owing to a scarcity in the valley, to issue pork as a ration to the crew.

The day after the departure of the gun for the mountains, Mouina, chief warrior of the valley tribe, was introduced to Captain Porter. He was a tall, fine looking young man, with an intelligent countenance, and he made a very favorable impression on the Americans. He had left the other warriors at the fortified camp, and requested that a *bouhi* (musket) might be fired, as he wished to see its effect. Several Happahs were about the camp, for, notwithstanding the bitter war that existed, certain privileged persons

were permitted to come and go freely on both sides. To show these individuals the folly of attempting to contend with clubs and spears against firearms, a musket was fired at a mark, to show that a man could seldom be missed; and a water cask was riddled by a volley from the marines.

Mouina was much impressed with the effect of the musketry, but the obstinate Happahs said that the *bouhis* could not harm them; that they would try the effect of a battle, and if defeated would be willing to make peace; but the Captain informed them that he should not be so willing to make peace after beating them. Seeing that the Happahs were determined upon a conflict, and that they attributed the forbearance of the Americans to cowardice, Capt. Porter concluded to gratify them, and put a stop to a state of affairs which was causing much suffering to his friends in the valley. He knew that a conflict must ensue, sooner or later, and he found that even the people of the valley, which was called Tienhoy, were beginning to lose faith in his ability to vanquish the Happahs.

Here we will pause a moment, to describe the Island of Nookaheeva, called by Ingraham Madison's island, where these events were taking place; it is the largest of the Washington group, being eighteen miles in length and ten in breadth, and is traversed by a range of rocky mountains elevated from three to five thousand feet above the sea, with offsets on either side, extending to the shores; thus dividing the island into transverse valleys, watered by copious streams, forming picturesque cascades. The interior highlands are mostly bare and inaccessible, and the rocky coast beaten by the surf. At the time of Porter's visit, each valley was inhabited by different tribes, living together in large families as neighbors. In the Tienhoy valley there were six of these tribes collectively called Taeehs (friends), and Gattanewa was acknowledged as chief by four of them; but he had great influence besides over the other two. One of these two tribes, the Havouhs, was a democracy, having expelled their chief, a relative of Gattanewa, for misconduct. Their priest Tawattoa had, however, great influence with them, and decided all controversies. What government the islanders had, was patriarchal; wealth was power, as in more civilized countries,

and there was much pride of ancestry. Gattanewa traced his descent for *eighty-eight generations*, which is a good deal more than some of our aristocrats can do; and, contrary to the Darwinian theory, his family tree did not commence with a monkey. According to Nookaheevan tradition, Oataia, or day-light, and Ananoona, his wife, came from Vavao, an island underneath Nookaheeva, and brought with them bread fruit, sugar cane, and other plants. They had forty children all named after the plants they brought with them, except the eldest son who was called Po or night. They settled in the valley of Tienhoy, but soon spread all over the island; and Gattanewa drew his chief consideration from the fact of his inheriting the honors of the great Oataia; and the principal people all over the island were married to his sisters or descendants.

The Happahs consisted of six tribes, and resided in a valley near Comptroller's bay. On the north of Comptroller's bay, an extensive, highly cultivated, and beautiful valley was thickly inhabited by the warlike Typees, divided into three tribes. There were numbers of other principal tribes, all of which were subdivided into bands like the Taeehs, Happahs and Typees, and Captain Porter estimated that the combined number of warriors on the island amounted to 19,200 men, of which 2500 were Taeehs, 3000 Happahs and 3500 Typees. Captain Porter accounts for this great number by saying, that old and young all were capable of managing spear, club or sling. Their mode of fighting was a system of constant skirmishing, and the skulls of their enemies were valued as trophies, as is the case with many tribes of Indians on the north-west coast of America. For their combats, they generally selected a plain where one or two natives, decked out in all their finery, advanced towards the opposite party, skillfully avoiding the shower of spears and stones, and dared them to single combat. These were soon pursued by a greater number, who in turn were driven back; and if an enemy should chance to fall, he was instantly dispatched with clubs and borne off in triumph. Their arms were beautifully made; the clubs skillfully carved with outlandish figures, and with their slings, made of the fibres of cocoanut bark, they threw stones of the weight of half a pound with a velocity and

accuracy that rendered them not a bad substitute for musketry, as the numerous scars, broken limbs and fractured skulls of the natives abundantly testified. These then were the people with whom the Americans would soon have to contend, *en masse*, unless they speedily manifested their power over the Happahs.

On the 28th of October, Gattanewa informed Captain Porter that the gun would be at the summit of the mountain by the time his people could reach that point, a statement which Porter could hardly credit, when he looked at the rugged country over which the gun must pass; but he promised the chief to send forty men with muskets next morning to the spot, asking for an equal number of natives to carry provisions and ammunition. That afternoon Gattanewa's wife and several daughters and granddaughters visited the camp, and manifested great interest in every thing they saw, particularly in the animals which they called hogs. Gattanewa's wife had evidently been as handsome in her youth as her descendants were at that moment. She reminded the captain of his exchange of names with her husband, and said, pointing to the others, that these were now his children, who looked to him for protection against the Happahs.

CHAPTER XII.

The morning after the gun was reported as having reached the top of the mountain, the party of seamen and marines, under Lieut. Downes, commenced their march, accompanied by a force of natives to transport their arms and provisions. Just as the party started old Gattanewa arrived, and informed Capt. Porter that his daughter, the wife of a Happah chief, had come as an envoy from the enemy to sue for peace. From Gattanewa's solicitude for peace, compared with his previous desire for hostilities,

Capt. Porter was apprehensive of some treachery; and knowing that the handful of men he had sent forward were at the mercy of the Taeehs he concluded to hold the old chief as a hostage until the expedition should return. The old man appeared very uneasy at his detention, and repeatedly asked if he was not going to be put to death in case any of the Americans should be injured by the Happahs; and it was with difficulty that his apprehensions were quieted. The party left at the camp consisted of but ten or twelve working men and a sentinel, and they were all busily engaged when a native came rushing in, exclaiming that the Happahs were only a short distance from the camp. The alarm gun was fired and everybody sprang to their arms and awaited behind the barrier of water casks the expected attack. Hearing no noise it was believed to be a false alarm, but finally a party of the enemy were seen skulking in the grass, but they took flight as soon as a six pounder was brought to bear on them.

About eleven o'clock, the party under Lieut. Downes had gained the mountains and could be seen from below driving the Happahs from height to height, the latter fighting as they retreated, and daring the Americans to follow them. One of the friendly natives waved an American flag in triumph as he skipped along the mountains. Most of the Taeehs kept at a respectful distance in the rear, but Mouina the chief was to be seen in advance conspicuous by his scarlet cloak and waving plumes. At about 4 P. M. the victorious army was seen descending the mountain, the natives bearing five dead bodies slung on poles.

Mr. Downes and his men were quite overcome with their unusual exertions. It seems that when they arrived at the summit, the Happahs assailed them with showers of stones and spears, and when driven from their position had sought refuge in a fortress made of the trunks of trees on the brow of a steep declivity. Here they made a stand to the number of three or four thousand, and dared the Americans to the attack. The latter after taking breath rushed up the hill headed by Lieut. Downes, who in advancing was stretched breathless on the ground, by a blow from a stone; and at the same instant, one of his

men was pierced through the neck with a spear. This checked the advance for a moment, but Lieut. Downes soon recovered and gave the order to charge, which was done with three cheers, and amid a shower of stones and spears the Americans entered the fort. Not until this moment did the Happahs think of retreating, and one of them fought until the muzzle of a piece was presented to his forehead and the top of his head blown entirely off. The friendly Indians now collected the dead bodies, and ran to plunder the adjacent village of provisions and household utensils, returning laden with the spoil; for the Happahs had not thought it necessary to carry anything away, not thinking that a handful of men could defeat their forces.

It was shocking to see the manner in which the wounded Happahs were treated by the friendly natives. They rushed at them with their war clubs and immediately dispatched them, after which, each dipped the point of his spear in the blood of the dead men, which nothing could induce them to wipe off. From that time the spear bore the name of the slain, and its value was greatly enhanced.

Gattanewa was now released, much to his satisfaction. He was greatly in dread of his powerful allies, having heard from the natives with what ease the Americans had captured the fort. The number of the dead exceeded so far that of any previous battle, that he could not realize it.

The affair was very creditable to the Americans, when we consider that a handful of men were opposed to thousands of athletic savages. But two Americans were wounded, and one Taeeh had his jaw broken by a stone. The dead were laid out in the public square, with the exception of one body which was that of a Taeeh, who had married among the Happahs, whose remains were given to his relations.

Captain Porter had been informed that the natives were cannibals; but on questioning Gattanewa although the chief acknowledged that they sometimes had eaten their enemies, he declared that none of his own family were ever known to have tasted human flesh. Several of the dead bodies that had fallen into the hands of the natives were seen unmutilated until they became too much de-

composed to have been eaten. This report of their being cannibals, was an ugly feature in the character of this otherwise interesting people; but the acknowledgments of Gattanewa left little doubt on Capt. Porter's mind. These natives were generous and benevolent, very cleanly in all their habits. It was remarked that, previous to eating, an islander would first smell of his food, and if in the least degree tainted reject it. How a people so delicate in their tastes, inhabiting a country abounding in delicious fruits, could practice such a loathsome habit as that of cannibalism, was beyond conception, and furnished a striking instance of human inconsistency.

On visiting Gattanewa's wife, Capt. Porter found that she was in a state of terror, fearing that since he had destroyed the Happahs, Porter would treat the Taeehs in the same manner. Bursting into tears she knelt before the Captain, and begged for mercy for herself and children. The latter soon quieted her fears, and assured her that he would protect the Taeehs against all their enemies, so long as they were friendly, but if any treachery was attempted towards the Americans he would lay the whole valley waste; all of which Taiheatairah communicated to the assembled natives in an impassioned speech, to show them the importance of living on friendly terms with the mighty foreigners.

Gattanewa, in the meantime, was rejoicing over the bodies of the slain in the public square; and on proceeding thither, the chief appeared with a cocoanut in one hand containing some sour substance, and in the other a raw fish, which he occasionally dipped in the cocoanut and then ate; but as soon as he found that this primitive mode of eating was offensive to the Americans, he desisted from it. The bodies were lying on the ground still attached to the poles by which they had been brought down the mountain, and surrounded by a crowd of five or six hundred warriors beating drums and chanting songs. An important religious ceremony was in fact progressing, in honor of the victory over the Happahs; possibly as a preliminary to their indulging in the cannibal feast which follows success in battle. To this conjecture was given a

coloring of truth, by the confusion which was caused by Captain Porter's appearance on the scene. The natives attempted to conceal the bodies, but the Captain ordered them to be brought back, and an examination showed them not to have been mutilated. In response to Porter's suspicions, the natives protested that they had no intention of eating their enemys' bodies, but requested that they might keep them above ground for a day or two longer, to perform the usual ceremonies on such occasions, to which they had been accustomed from time immemorial. These consisted in singing songs of victory, and returning thanks to their gods, for sending Opetee to their assistance. Whatever may have been the real intentions of the natives, they succeeded in removing from the minds of the Americans, the suspicion that they were intending to eat the dead bodies.

A Happah messenger now arrived, and was agreeably surprised when Captain Porter offered him his hand. He reported many of the tribe wounded by musket balls, and that all were desirous of peace. The messenger took back with him a white handkerchief attached to a spear, which he was told would protect any one who bore it; and the same day Gattanewa's son-in-law arrived under protection of the white handkerchief, to treat for peace, expressing the utmost regret for their past folly, and a desire to make any amends in their power. Peace was accordingly granted, on condition of their sending in once a week a supply of breadfruit, hogs, &c., for the Americans, for which they would receive payment in articles valuable to the natives. In the course of the day, the other Happah chiefs came in and subscribed to the terms proposed, which were much better than they expected to receive; and, within two days, envoys came in from every tribe on the island, with the exception of the warlike Typees and the unpronounceable Hatecaaheottwohos; the first confiding in their strength, and the latter in their distance from the scene of action. These allied tribes had been taught by their priests to believe themselves invincible; but all the others subscribed to terms, and for several weeks the Americans luxuriated in the good things the island afforded.

Noticing that the tent pitched at the camp did not ex-

clude the rain, over 4000 of the natives went to work on the 3d of November, and in a single day completed a dwelling house for the captain, another for the officers, a sail loft, a cooper's shop, hospital, bake house, guard house, and a shed for the sentinel to walk under. This village was laid down, according to a plan of Captain Porter, in the form of a crescent; the buildings connected by a wall four feet in height, and all the work was executed with much neatness and without confusion. When the village was completed, harpoons and iron hoops were distributed to the workmen; and Gattanewa and his people were much pleased that the house built by them was considered the best.

It seemed strange that these natives, who appeared to have nobody over them exercising any considerable authority, and were neither stimulated by rewards nor deterred by fear of punishment, should conceive and execute works of such magnitude. They seemed to act with one mind and to be influenced by the same impulse. Their greatest achievement was in carrying the gun to the top of the mountain, without the aid of any mechanical appliances, and over a country where the unincumbered Americans could only pass at the risk of breaking their necks. The task was performed by relays of natives, the people of one valley taking the gun a certain distance, and then turning it over to those of the next valley, and so on; but the building of the Egyptian pyramids seems hardly as wonderful as the achievement of these untutored savages, whose sole object seemed to be to live without exertion in their enervating climate.

The Typees now began to cause the Americans some uneasiness, as their bad example in continually defying the strangers would, it was feared, operate injuriously on the other tribes. It is an established fact that all savages respect you so long as they fear you, but the moment they dare to do so will set you at defiance. Temaa Tipee, a chief of the valley of Showeme, had not been very punctual in sending the supplies which, in common with other chiefs, he had promised the Americans, and his example had the effect of causing the others to fall off; it was, therefore, found necessary to notify this chief of his neglect,

and to inform him that in default of compliance with his promises he would be considered as an enemy. The chief replied that he should have been more punctual, but the Happahs refused his people permission to pass through their valley; which story (although not believed in as its truth was positively denied by the Happahs), was taken as a satisfactory explanation, and Temaa Tipee sent six large canoes loaded with fruit and hogs to propitiate Capt. Porter, and was no doubt rewarded with a couple of iron hoops.

It was now ascertained that it was not the Happahs but the Typees who had threatened Temaa Tipee, calling him a coward, and saying that they would drive him off his land; and the chief, therefore, claimed the protection of the Americans, which Captain Porter promised him, and sealed the bond of friendship by exchanging names, the chief assuming that of David, while the captain was honored by that of Temaa Tipee. The chief and his tribe were greatly pleased with this compliment and ever afterwards conducted themselves with great propriety. Tavee (as Temaa Tipee called himself), was a very handsome man and exceedingly fond of ornamenting his person, and to such an extent did he carry his love for finery, as to offer his handsome wife (of whom he seemed to be very fond), for a string of glass beads!

It now became necessary to have a perfect understanding with the Typees, and a messenger was sent to enquire of them if they wished to be at peace with the Americans or not, informing them that the latter had sufficient strength to drive them into the sea, but would grant the Typees the same terms as the other tribes, only requiring an exchange of presents as a proof of their friendly disposition. In reply the Typees said that they saw no reason why they should want the friendship of the Americans, having got along thus far without it; or why they should present the strangers with fruit and hogs; that if Porter was strong enough he would come and take them; and that it was time enough to think of parting with their provisions, when they could no longer keep their valley. This message was delivered to Capt. Porter in the presence of Gattanewa, Mouina, and many of the friendly tribes. Mouina foamed with rage, and was for immediate hostili-

ties; but old Gattanewa became serious, and said that he would send his son to advise the Typees to be friendly, and even offered to go himself and inform the enemy of the dreadful effects of the *bouhies* and of the madness of resistance. The son accordingly departed, and in two days brought messages from the Typees to the effect that Gattanewa and all his people were cowards; that the Americans had beaten the Happahs because they were cowards; that Porter and his people were white lizards and mere dirt, and much more filthy abuse which they must have obtained from contact with civilized people, as such expressions were not common among the simple islanders. They sneered at the Americans, who, they said, were incapable of enduring the slightest fatigue, and could not climb the mountains without the assistance of the natives. They dared Porter to come to their valley, and said, they did not dread the bouhies as much as they were dreaded by the cowardly Taeehs and Happahs.

When these insulting messages were delivered Gattanewa withdrew all opposition to war, saying the Typees deserved chastisement, while Mouina demanded immediate action: but Captain Porter, not thinking it advisable to submit to any dictation, checked Mouina's impetuosity for fear his example might become contagious, and that he might find it difficult to keep the natives under that control by which only could the Americans be secure against such a great preponderance of numbers. He informed the chief that his opinion was not required, and that he should not consult him in any way about going to war or making peace; and that if he could not conduct himself more respectfully, he must leave the enclosure. It was not to be expected that one of the lords of the soil would bear such language with patience, especially as it is probable the interpreter interlarded it with some spicy inventions of his own; and Mouina, as soon as he recovered from his astonishment, coolly informed Capt. Porter that he believed he was a coward. The Captain, on the impulse of the moment, pursued the chief, and presenting a musket at his head, threatened him with destruction should he repeat such conduct, at the same time ordering the terror stricken native never to set foot in the enclosure again.

It was now determined to make a combined attack on the Typees by land and sea, although Capt. Porter was in hopes that the Typees, when they heard what extensive preparations were making, would be induced to sue for peace. The Taeehs and Happahs were notified to hold themselves in readiness, and were so delighted at the prospect of war that they could think of nothing else. Capt. Porter, apprehensive (from the fickleness of the natives), that his allies were not much to be depended upon, concluded to construct a fort for the protection of the American village; and also to secure the Taeehs against incursions from any other tribes. The possession of this fort would also ensure perfect protection to the Americans, in case the natives should prove treacherous, by no means an unlikely circumstance. Porter was also of opinion that these islands would some day be valuable to the United States, and he was desirous to strengthen the claim of our government by every means in his power. Gattanewa and his people, so far from objecting to the erection of a fort, requested that they might go to work on it as soon as possible, and in response to Porter's inquiries whether they would be faithful to the American flag, said that they would always receive the Americans as brothers and prevent their enemies the English from coming among them; for they well knew that war existed between the two nations, and that all the vessels in port except the Essex had been taken from the English. Finding that the natives were anxious for an alliance with the Americans, Captain Porter promised them that as soon as the fort was built a treaty should be signed, which would make them all brothers of one nation. The fort was soon constructed with casks filled with sand on an elevation difficult of assault, and commanding the town and harbor. The Captain directed the work, and showed that he had the talents of an engineer, as well as those of a seaman. The fort was calculated for sixteen guns, but, for the present, it was not thought necessary to mount but four. On the 14th the work was completed, the Taeehs all the time talking of war with the Typees, and anticipating the plunder they would get from their enemies.

About this time, Capt. Porter discovered a conspiracy

among his prisoners, the object of which was to get possession of the Essex Junior; a very foolish, and, considering the kindness with which they had been treated, a very treacherous scheme. The prisoners had been permitted to go where they pleased, without any restraint, under a promise of conducting themselves with propriety and not absenting themselves, much to the surprise of the natives, who wondered why the Americans did not kill them. This indulgence only encouraged the prisoners in the hope of making their escape. Lawson, the mate of the Hammond, was the ringleader, and the night of the 14th was fixed on for making the attempt, which was to be inaugurated by getting such of the crew as remained on board the Essex junior intoxicated by means of rum mixed with laudanum. The third mate, with the prisoners on shore, was to get possession of the canoes on the beach, and with them to surprise the ship and take her to sea, there being no other vessel in condition to follow her, and no powder on board the frigate with which to stop her.

Captain Porter learned of these plans almost as soon as they were conceived, and willing to humor the conspirators, gave them every chance to make the attempt, adopting at the same time suitable precautions for securing them. The two sentinels placed over the rum casks on the gun deck had been corrupted by some of the conspirators, and had connived at their stealing liquor, but the theft was discovered and the sentries severely punished. Next evening, on making his usual round of the camp to see that everything was right, the sentinel at the bake house was found asleep. The necessity of great vigilance had been impressed on the minds of everyone, both on account of the prisoners and of the natives. The friendly footing on which the Americans stood with the natives was entirely owing to the latter being convinced that the Americans were always on their guard, and the Captain was determined that the safety of the whole should not be hazarded by one man. The culprit, therefore, received a ball through the fleshy part of his thigh, and this example had the desired effect of rendering the men more vigilant. Should the punishment awarded the sentry seem severe, it should be remembered that a court martial would have pro-

bably sentenced him to death, as the only penalty adequate to such an offense.

Sunday night had been fixed upon, by the conspirators, for making their attempt; but the day before, a ship hove in sight off the mouth of the harbor, and the Essex junior immediately gave chase to her. Capt. Porter at once put all the prisoners in irons, thus terminating their hope of escape; and to punish their violation of parole, they were set to work to build a stone wall around the village, which was finished before the Essex left the place.

The next day the strange sail, which had been chased by the Essex junior, came into port, and proved to be the American ship Albatross, from the Sandwich islands, in search of sandal wood; but the captain of the Essex was sorry to see her in this place, as he was afraid that she would make the whereabouts of his vessel known.

About this time a circumstance occurred which threatened disagreeable consequences, but ended very pleasantly; so that, on the whole, the Captain did not regret it. Robert Dunn, quarter master, had been threatened with punishment by the officer of the watch for neglect of duty; but Dunn said that his time of enlistment had expired, and if punished he would never again do duty. This being reported to the Captain, caused him great uneasiness, for most of the crew were in the same situation as Dunn. Promptness and decision were necessary at this crisis, and all hands were immediately mustered on the quarter deck and informed of Dunn's offense. Dunn was then prepared for a flogging at the gangway, (an unusual occurrence on board the Essex), and informed by the Captain that after punishing him severely, he would turn him on shore, for as his time was out it was proper that he should have his discharge. He then addressed the ship's company, commenting on the impropriety of Dunn's conduct, and the evils it would lead to if tolerated. He said that many of their times were out; and from that moment he gave up all claim upon their services; that they were their own masters and should have their discharges on the spot. To those who wished to enlist again to serve the cruise, he would give the usual advance, and on a suitable occasion, three days liberty on shore; that such

as did not desire to reënlist, but would bind themselves to do duty might remain on board until the ship arrived in some civilized place; that they should be supplied with food, but should receive neither pay nor prize money. Such as wished their discharge were to hand in their names so that their papers could be made out.

Having ended his speech the Captain ordered Dunn to be punished, when the officers and petty officers stepped forward and solicited his pardon, on the ground that he was intoxicated at the time of committing his offense. Dunn also begged for forgiveness, and as a proof of his attachment to the ship requested that his name might be placed first on the shipping list. This was all that the Captain required. He merely wished to let his crew understand that he would not submit to insubordination; and an acknowledgment of fault went far with him in remitting punishment. Dunn was pardoned, and all those whose times were out reënlisted, except one man who, from some whim, did not desire to ship though wishing to remain on duty.

This affair was very adroitly managed by Capt. Porter, who in all probability did not intend to punish Dunn; as according to the strict letter of the law, he had no right to do so, the man's time having expired. He desired to rule without the colt and cats if he could, but was determined at all hazards to maintain discipline.

The arrival of the Albatross pleased the sailors mightily; she had brought from China a cargo of beads and trinkets to exchange for sandal wood, and they soon disposed of their advance money, which was only so much trash, in exchange for articles which they knew would please the native girls, who hearing of the abundance of *peepees*, (beads), and other *tie ties* (presents), with which their admirers were supplied, flocked to the settlement from every tribe with whom the Americans were at peace.

On the 19th of November, 1813, the American flag was hoisted over the fort, and a salute of seventeen guns fired, which was returned by the shipping. The island was then formally taken possession of, for the United States, and called Madison's island, the village Madisonville, the fort, Fort Madison, and the harbor Massachusetts bay. The

act of taking possession was read and signed, and the prosperity of the newly acquired territory was drank by all present. The natives were much pleased when the object of the ceremony was explained to them, at being made Malleekees (Americans) and wanted to know if their new chief was as great a man as Gattanewa. The following is the *Declaration*, which will show that we possess a right to what may become a very important commercial point.

DECLARATION.— It is hereby made known to the world that I David Porter a captain in the navy of the United States of America and now in command of the United States frigate the Essex, have on the part of the said United States taken possession of the island called by the natives Nookaheevah, generally known by the name of Sir Henry Martin's island, but now called Madison's island. That by the request and assistance of the friendly tribes residing in the valley of Tienhoy, as well as of the tribes residing on the mountains, whom we have conquered and rendered tributary to our flag, I have caused the village of Madison to be built consisting of six convenient houses, a rope walk, bakery and other appurtenances, and for the protection of the same, as well as for that of the friendly natives, I have constructed a fort calculated for mounting sixteen guns whereon I have mounted four, and called the same Fort Madison.

Our rights to this island being founded on priority of discovery, conquest and possession cannot be disputed; but the natives to secure to themselves that friendly protection which their defenseless situation so much required, have requested to be admitted into the great American family, whose pure republican policy approaches so near their own; and in order to encourage these views to their own interest and happiness, as well as to render secure our claim to an island valuable on many considerations, I have taken on myself to promise them that they shall be so adopted; that our chief shall be their chief; and they have given assurances that such of their brethren as may hereafter visit them, from the United States, shall enjoy a welcome and hospitable reception among them, and be furnished with whatever refreshments and supplies the island may afford; that they will protect them against all their enemies; and that, as far as lies in their power, they will prevent the subjects of Great Britain (knowing them to be such) from coming among them until peace shall take place between the two nations.

Presents consisting of the produce of the island to a great amount have been brought in by every tribe in the island, not excepting the most remote, and have been enumerated as follows: (Here follows enumeration of thirty-one tribes.)

Most of the above have requested to be taken under the protection of our flag; and all have been willing to purchase on any terms a friendship which promises to them so many advantages.

Influenced by considerations of humanity, which promises speedy civilization to those who enjoy every mental and bodily endowment, which nature can bestow, and which requires only art to perfect, as well as by views of policy, which secures to my country a fruitful and populous island, possessing every advantage of security and supplies for vessels; and which of all others is the most happily situated, as respects climate and local position; I declare that I have in the most solemn manner, under the American flag displayed in Fort Madison and in the presence of numerous witnesses, taken possession of the said island, called Madison's island for the use of the United States, whereof I am a citizen; and that the act of taking possession was announced by a salute of seventeen guns from the artillery of Fort Madison, and returned by the shipping in the harbor, which is hereafter to be called Massachusetts Bay. And that our claim to this island may not be hereafter disputed, I have buried in a bottle at the foot of the flagstaff in Fort Madison, a copy of this instrument together with several pieces of money the coin of the United States.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto affixed my signature, this 19th day of November, 1813.

DAVID PORTER.

Witnesses present — John Downes, Lieutenant U. S. N.; James P. Wilmer, Lieutenant U. S. N.; S. D. McKnight, Acting Lieutenant U. S. N.; Jno. G. Cowell, Acting Lieutenant; David P. Adams, Chaplain U. S. N.; John M. Gamble, Lieutenant U. S. Marines; Richard K. Hoffman, Acting Surgeon U. S. N.; John M. Maury, Midshipman U. S. N.; M. W. Bostwick, Acting Midshipman U. S. N.; William Smith, Master of the American Ship Albatross; William H. Odenheimer, Acting Sailing Master U. S. N.; Wilson P. Hunt, Agent for the American North Pacific Fur Company; P. de Mecter, Benjamin Clapp, citizens of the United States.

The fact of taking possession of the island in this formal manner may be thought indiscreet, or at all events unnecessary on the part of the American commander; but, it must be remembered, that he was only following the custom of all civilized nations under similar circumstances, and that the discovery and exploration of the group by Ingraham and Roberts had given us an undoubted claim over the British and French. The advantages to the

United States of the Washington islands were not so evident then, as they are now to the great mass of people who seldom take the trouble to look beyond the end of their noses; but Captain Porter fully appreciated their value *then*, as France does at the present time.

A straight line run through the Marquesas from Panama will strike the great port of Sydney in Australia. England, who is belting the world, in all directions, with her lines of steamers, and whose very existence depends on the maintenance of her commerce, will, in a very short time, have a line of swift vessels from England to Australia, via Panama. Nookaheevah will then be the principal port of deposit for coal and other supplies, for which purposes it has no equal. Instead of taking two months to get to Australia, the shortest time by which a passage can be made via the Cape of Good Hope, steamers of fair speed will go from England via Panama in forty-four days. That is England's advantage in the Pacific; and it seems strange that she should have let the French, who do nothing for colonization, or for commerce, take possession of the Marquesas islands.

Nature has given the islands of the Pacific advantages that will, not many years hence, result in the foundation of a great empire in that quarter, when the last remnant of the once numerous tribes will have disappeared before the advances of civilization: but we have wandered from the Essex, to which we must now return.

All hands were now desirous to get away from the Washington islands, and follow up former successes, and did everything to hasten the Essex's departure. The Captain sold the guns of Fort Madison to the captain of the Albatross, (which vessel soon departed for China), to do away with the impression that the taking possession of the island was anything more than a mere formality; but, as soon as the ship had gone, they were replaced by others.

Mr. John J. King, master's mate, was now directed to take command of the New Zealander; and, after taking on board all the oil from the other prizes, to proceed to the United States.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAPT. Porter had hoped that no occasion would occur to carry out his threat against the Typees; but the Taeehs, the Happahs and Shouemes made urgent complaints of the insults and aggressions of the Typees. They had threatened to drive one tribe off their land, and they had thrown stones and otherwise insulted individuals of other tribes. These were not very serious offenses, and likely not more than they had done before; but the Taeehs and Happahs became very solicitous for war, and began to utter loud complaints, that (as all the other tribes on the island had formed an alliance with the Americans) the Typees should be tolerated in their insolence, and excused from supplying them as the rest had done. The more distant tribes had now discontinued bringing in their supplies, and the others had fallen off considerably, complaining that the Americans had nearly exhausted all their stock, while the Typees were enjoying abundance. "Lead us to the Typees," they said, "and we shall be able to furnish you from their valley. You have long threatened them, their insults have been great, you have promised to protect us against them, and yet permit them to offer violence to us; and while you have made every other tribe tributary, you permit the Typees to triumph with impunity. Our canoes are in readiness, our warriors impatient, and for less provocation had you not been here, we should have engaged in hostilities. Let us punish these Typees and bring them to the same terms to which we have agreed; and the whole island will then be at peace."

These were the sentiments expressed by the Taeehs and Happahs; but Tavee seemed determined to remain neutral, he was separated from the Taeehs, by the valley of the Typees; and they had it in their power to retort on him at will, and so in spite of his grievances Tavee was unwilling to go to war.

Finding it absolutely necessary for his own salvation, to bring about a conflict, Porter on the 27th November, informed his allies that he should commence hostilities next day, and directed Gattanewa to proceed on board the Essex junior, with two persons who were to be sent to the Typees on the arrival of the ship in their bay, to offer them the same terms as had been accepted by the other tribes. The Essex junior sailed in the afternoon; and next morning, at three o'clock, Captain Porter proceeded with five boats, well manned and armed, accompanied by ten war canoes, the natives blowing their conchs as a signal to keep together. At sunrise they arrived at the Typee landing, where they were joined by ten war canoes from the Happahs, and the Essex junior, which anchored off the landing. The tops of the neighboring mountains were covered with Taeehs and Happahs, armed with spears, clubs and slings; and the beach was thronged with warriors, who had come in the canoes or joined them from the hills. The whole force amounted to at least five thousand men, but not a sign of the Typees could be seen. Back of the beach was a small level plain, backed by an impenetrable thicket and the only approach to habitations seemed to be a narrow pathway leading through the swamp. The boats and canoes were drawn up on the beach, and Lieut. Downes landed with fifteen men, which, with the twenty from the Essex, were supposed to be sufficient to bring the Typees to terms.

We give the account of this affair pretty much in Capt. Porter's own words, as injustice would be done by any material abridgment.

In the meantime the Typees had appeared in the bushes, and pelted the invaders with stones while eating breakfast, but without doing any damage. One of the ambassadors (who having married a Typee woman, was a privileged character among the hostile natives) was sent under a white flag to inform the Typees that Opotee had come prepared to offer them peace or war; all he required was, that they should submit to the same terms as had been complied with by the other tribes; and that their friendship would be much more pleasing to him, than any satisfaction he expected to derive from chastising them.

The ambassador returned to the beach in a very few moments, the picture of terror, and reported that he had met an ambuscade in the bushes; and that the Typees, regardless of his flag of truce, had driven him back threatening him with death if he again ventured among them. At this moment a shower of stones from the bushes confirmed the ambassador's story and a native darted across the pathway, who was knocked over by a shot through the leg and carried off by his friends; war had now commenced in earnest, and the order was given to march.

The brave Mouina had already forgotten the difficulty between himself and Captain Porter, or else his love of fighting had overcome his ill humor, and he placed himself as usual in advance. On entering the bushes, the party was assailed by spears and stones, which came in all directions from different bands of the enemy lying in ambush. The snapping of slings, and the whizzing of stones and spears, was incessant, but not an enemy could be seen or the sound of a voice heard. To remain still would have been fatal to the Americans; to have retreated would have convinced the natives of their incapacity, and the only safety for our people was to advance, and clear the thicket, which they were informed was of no great extent.

The attacking party had advanced about a mile, and had received no injury nor had they inflicted any on the Typees, so far as they knew; although a scattering fire had been kept up on the enemy as they darted from tree to tree. At last they reached a small opening on the bank of a river, whence from a thicket on the opposite side, a stone was thrown which shattered the bone of Lieut. Downes's leg. Parties of the enemy, in ambush, had been left in the rear, as it was impossible to dislodge them, and to trust the wounded officer to his native allies to take to a place of safety, would be hazarding too much; while Capt. Porter was fearful of weakening his own force by detaching any part of it as an escort. To have turned back, would have been considered by every native as an acknowledgment of defeat. So far, the allied tribes had stood silent spectators of the scene; waiting, no doubt, to take sides with the stronger party. The mountain sides

were thronged with Happahs, whose fidelity the Americans, as well as the Taaehs, had good reason to doubt. A defeat would no doubt have sealed the destruction of the Americans; and Porter now found that he had come with inadequate means to reduce the Typees; having received erroneous impressions regarding the country through which he must pass. There was no other alternative but to go on; something was necessary to convince all the tribes of American superiority; the accompanying Indians were dropping off and no time was to be lost in deliberating.

Mr. Shaw with four men was now directed to escort Lieut. Downes to the beach; and this, with the party left to guard the boats, reduced the sailors and marines to twenty-four, who pushed rapidly forward. The allies had fallen off wonderfully, and even Mouina hung back. While he had kept in advance, he was of great service; for, by the astonishing quickness of his eye, he had put those behind him on their guard, and enabled them to elude the shower of stones and spears; but now they came so thick that even he had to retire to avoid them.

The Americans soon reached the ford in the river; on the opposite side of which, the Typees, in great numbers, made a stand in the thick bushes, and discharged a shower of missiles on the invaders. Here the advance was checked for a few moments, the banks of the river being steep their retreat would have been difficult and dangerous in case of a repulse. The stream was deep and rapid, and the attempt to ford hazardous, on account of the exposed situation of the men crossing in face of a thousand savages. Finding it impossible to dislodge the natives with musketry, Capt. Porter ordered the men to fire a volley, and dash across the river; and with three hearty cheers the sailors gained the opposite bank.

The march was now still more difficult, for the underwood was so interlaced that it was sometimes necessary for the men to crawl on their hands and knees to get forward, all the time harassed by the irrepressible Typees. Only Mouina and two of his men had kept up with the Americans, the rest of the allies had halted on the bank of the river.

They now reached a small clearing, free of trees or

bushes, the natives had ceased to annoy them, and they hoped soon to arrive at the Typee village, which was but a short distance ahead. But their joy was of short duration, for they soon perceived a strong and extensive wall, seven feet in height, crowning an eminence covering the road, and flanked on each side by an impenetrable thicket, from which they were assailed with such showers of stones mingled with horrid yells as left no doubt on their minds that this was the Typee stronghold. The Americans were now in an awkward position, exposed to the missiles of the enemy without any adequate shelter. Capt. Porter, Lieut. Gamble and Surgeon Hoffman, from behind a tree, were enabled to annoy the Typees as they appeared above the wall to throw their missiles. These were the only muskets that could be employed to advantage, the rest keeping up a scattering fire without effect. Orders were now given to storm the fort, but it was found that some of the men had expended their ammunition, and none of them had more than four or five cartridges remaining. This news threw a damper on the whole party, for without ammunition their weapons were inferior to those of the savages. They could neither advance nor retreat with safety; and their only chance was to hold their ground, until a fresh supply of ammunition could arrive.

Lieut. Gamble and four men were therefore dispatched to the beach to procure from the Essex junior a fresh supply; and Capt. Porter and his remaining companions were now kept busy in eluding the stones which flew in every direction. Fortunately, the natives fought according to their established tactics, never sallying out, or exposing themselves to capture. If they had made a rush at this time, the Americans would probably have been overpowered; but the latter keeping up an occasional fire to show that they had no intention of retreating, kept the Typees in check.

The number of the Americans was now reduced to nineteen, and Capt. Porter was the only officer left; all the allies had deserted except the brave Mouina; and, to add to their troubles, three of the men had been knocked over with stones. Mouina begged Porter to retreat, crying "mattee, mattee," and the wounded entreated him to per-

mit their comrades to carry them to the beach; but this was out of the question, though there seemed to be no hope of success with so small a force, while the Typees remained in their stronghold; and the Captain, therefore, determined to draw them out by a feigned retreat, and by this means gain some advantage, for he believed that to return without this would have rendered an attack from the Happahs certain. These people had no doubt deceived him all along, and had led him through the most difficult passes, hoping to get the Americans in a position where all parties could attack them with a certainty of success. Never was a man placed in a more difficult position; but Capt. Porter's coolness and self possession did not for a moment desert him. He ordered the wounded to be taken charge of, and for all to run to the rear until concealed by the bushes. As the men retreated the natives rushed after them with hideous yells. The first and second to advance were killed at a distance of a few paces, and those who attempted to carry them off were wounded; whereupon, they abandoned their dead, and precipitately retreated.

Taking advantage of the confusion into which the Typees were thrown, the Americans fell back across the river with their wounded; they were scarcely over the stream, when the natives again attacked them; but this did not prevent the Americans from returning to the beach. They were much fatigued with marching and fighting, and had now learned to hold their enemy in more respect, as by no means contemptible antagonists, and to properly appreciate the difficulties to be overcome in reaching them.

On his arrival at the beach, Capt. Porter found a reinforcement of men from the Essex junior, together with a supply of ammunition. He was desirous of sounding the Typees, before proceeding to further extremities, as also to impress the allies with the idea that he could carry all before him; assuming the air and manner of a conqueror, although he says he felt very little like one.

One of the ambassadors was now directed to proceed to the Typee stronghold, to tell the enemy that with a handful of men he had driven them into their fort; that

he had killed and wounded several of their party, and now had sufficient force on shore to drive them out of their valley; but not wishing to injure them, he would still grant them the terms first proposed. The Typees sent back word to Opotee, that they had killed his chief warrior (Lieut. Downes), and wounded several of his people, compelling him to retreat. It was true, they said, he had killed two of them and wounded many others, but considering their superior numbers what was this compared to the injury done to the Americans. The Typees had plenty of men to spare, the Americans had not. If the latter were able to drive them from the valley, what was the use of telling them about it; they would only believe it when they saw it done. They said they were as well acquainted with the number of Porter's men as himself; they knew their own strength and the numbers they could oppose, and held the *bouhies* in more contempt than ever; they frequently missed fire, rarely killed, and the wounds they inflicted were not nearly so painful as those of a spear or stone; and they knew that the bouhies would be perfectly useless if it came on to rain. They dared the Americans to renew the contest, and assured them they would not retreat beyond the fort where the latter had left them. As the men were overcome with fatigue, and discouraged by the formidable appearance of the fortress, Capt. Porter determined to leave the Typees for the present, but meditated a severe punishment for them in the future.

The Happahs had now descended the hills with their arms; the Shouemes also appeared, and "the Typees have driven the white men" was the burden of their conversation. The handful of Americans were surrounded by several thousand Indians upon whose professions of friendship they could not rely. Everybody was now directed to go on board the Essex junior; but they had hardly reached the ship, when the Typees rushed from their cover and drove the allies into their canoes or into the water; upon seeing this Capt. Porter and his men again pulled towards the shore, causing the enemy to beat a precipitate retreat. When the allies in turn pursued them, knocking over one of the Typee warriors, whose body they carried off in

triumph. Seeing that the Typees would not face his men in a clear space, and being disgusted with bush fighting, Porter returned with the boats to Massachusetts bay, and was followed by the Essex junior.

The behavior of the friendly tribes, and particularly the Happahs, after the supposed defeat of the Americans, convinced Porter that he had no alternative but to prove his superiority by defeating the Typees; for it was obvious that the whole of the tribes would soon join the conquering side, as is the custom with savages, and the safety of the Americans as well as the interests of the government would be compromised by any failure to renew hostilities. So selecting two hundred men from the vessels, he directed them to be ready to start at daylight next morning, and cautioned every one to secrecy not wishing to be annoyed by the presence of his native allies, whom he had found worse than useless. Finding that the boats were leaking so as to be unfit to carry the party, he had the men landed that night, and as the moon shone brightly he hoped to be at the Typee valley long before daylight.

Supposing he would not be accompanied by many natives, Porter hoped, by moving noiselessly, to surprise the Typees and take some prisoners, which would probably bring the enemy to terms, and avoid the necessity of bloodshed. The crew of the Essex composed the main body, the scouting parties from the other vessels being headed by their respective officers. Gattanewa and his people were now notified, that they might not be alarmed at the warlike movements.

The advance was directed to halt on top of the mountain and await the coming of the main body. Several gave out before they reached the summit, which was attained with great difficulty; but after rest and refreshment, as it was bright moonlight, and the guides informed him (very incorrectly as it turned out), that they were not more than six miles from the enemy, he gave the order to march on. Several Taeehs had joined the party, but silence had been enjoined upon them as they were under the necessity of passing a Happah village, and were fearful that the Happahs would discover them, and give information to the Typees. Not a whisper was heard along the line. The

guides marching in front and the sailors and marines following in silence, up and down the rocky sides of the mountains, through swamps and thickets, across streams and along the sides of precipices, which made the adventurous crew shudder.

At midnight the drum was heard beating in the Typee camp, and the singing and lights in the village gave the impression that the enemy were rejoicing. The guides said they were celebrating the victory over the Americans, and calling on their gods to give rain and render the bouhies useless.

The party had now arrived at the pathway leading into the Typee valley, but the guides insisting that it was impossible to descend the mountain without daylight, as it was almost perpendicular, and that in many places it would be necessary to lower themselves down with great caution, Porter concluded to await patiently the return of day. Experience had shown him that when the Indians considered the roads bad, they were really so; and as the men were very much adverse to risking their necks any longer at night, he concluded to follow the advice of the natives, treacherous as they might be.

Capt. Porter was now in what he considered a good position, being in possession of the pathway to the valley, he could prevent the Happahs from giving the Typees any intelligence of his approach. He was on a narrow ridge separating the valleys of the two tribes, well situated to guard against an attack from either; and to add to the convenience of the situation, there was a stream of water not far distant. Guards were posted and all laid down to sleep on their arms.

The Captain had fallen into a doze when a native came to inform him that it was now coming on to rain very heavy, and as he expressed it, it would "mattee mattee bouhie." This appearance of rain caused loud shouts in the Typee valley, and drums were beating in every direction. The men were enjoined to take great care of their arms and ammunition but from the torrents of rain that soon poured down, little hope was entertained that any ammunition could be kept dry. The Captain spent a most anxious and disagreeable night. A cold and piercing

wind accompanied the deluge (for it could be called nothing else), and chilled every one to the heart. Without room to keep themselves warm by moving about, fearful of stirring lest they should be precipitated into eternity down the steep sides of the mountain, which had become so slippery that none could keep their feet, all anxiously waited for the morning.

The dawn of day was a welcome sight, although the wind and rain still continued, and great apprehensions were felt concerning the fate of the ammunition. With such good excuses a man of weaker nerves and less determination than Capt. Porter, would have turned back. Every one was drenched to the skin and the natives kept exclaiming that the muskets were spoiled, and wishing the Americans to retreat while there was yet time; but, notwithstanding his own misgivings, the Captain endeavored to impress them with the belief that water could do the muskets no injury. On careful examination he found that while the muskets were tolerably dry, more than half the ammunition was unfit for service.

Now that it was light enough to look into the Typee valley, the Americans were astonished to see the great height they were elevated and the steepness of the mountain they would have to descend. The narrow pathway soon disappeared among the cliffs, and the natives pronouncing the descent impossible on account of the slippery condition of the ground, and as the men were worn out with hunger, cold and fatigue, the Captain determined to take up his quarters in the Happah village until the next day, by which time it was hoped they would be refreshed and the weather become more favorable. Before leaving the hill, a volley was fired to show the natives that the muskets had not been injured by the rain; for it was believed that the Happahs, under a contrary impression, would not have hesitated to attack them; besides he wished to give the Typees timely notice of his approach that they might remove their women and children and most valuable effects to a place of safety; for, although he felt it necessary to chastise them into submission, he wished to prevent the innocent from suffering at the hands of his native allies. Besides he still hoped to terrify the Typees

into peaceful submission by a show of force, a wrong idea as it seems, for he had certainly ample proof of the determination of the Typees not to surrender without a struggle.

When the volley was fired, the Typees, who had apparently no suspicion of the proximity of the Americans, shouted, beat their drums and blew their war conchs from one end of the valley to the other, and what with the squealing of the hogs which were now being caught up for removal to a place of safety, the screams of the women and children, and the yells of the warriors, the din was frightful.

The party now descended with great difficulty to the Happah village and proceeded to the public square, around which were several houses that had been vacated on their account, and in which the officers and men were quartered, the American ensign being hoisted in front of the building selected by the Captain for his own use Guards being stationed, such of the party as needed it retired to sleep, and after the arduous work of the preceding night there were few who did not require rest. There was, however, no sign of provisions, nor did the natives seem disposed to accomodate their quasi allies beyond vacating certain houses, which had been stripped of their contents, leaving the Americans to shift for themselves as best they could. The Captain called for a mat to sleep on, but it was long before one could be found; he asked for a piece of cloth to wrap around his loins while his clothes were drying, but it was with difficulty procured. The men were hungry although the valley abounded with hogs and fruit.

The Happahs now began to assemble armed with clubs and spears, while the women seemed to be gradually retiring. Everything bore the appearance of hostile disposition on the part of the Happahs, and the friendly Taeehs cautioned the Americans to be on their guard. All the Americans were now directed to keep their arms in their hands, ready to assemble at a moment's warning. The chief of the Happahs was summoned and asked if he was disposed to be friendly, it was necessary that the Americans should have something to eat, and in default of the

Happahs furnishing supplies, they would be obliged to shoot the hogs and cut down the fruit trees as they could not climb them. The Captain also demanded that the Happahs should lay aside their arms; but as no notice was taken of any of his demands, he caused their clubs and spears to be taken from them and broken; and parties to be sent out to shoot hogs and cut down the fruit trees, and a sufficient supply of provisions was soon obtained.

The Happahs now became intimidated and commenced to bring in an abundance of provisions, the women returned to the village and friendship was reëstablished.

That night proper lookouts were posted, and fires lighted before each house; all not on guard devoted themselves to sleep; and at daylight the line of march was again formed, every man fresh and vigorous, and each supplied with provisions for the day. On ascending the ridge where the party had spent such a disagreeable night, they halted to take breath, and view for a few moments the beautiful valley which was soon to become a scene of desolation. The valley was about nine miles in length by three or four in breadth, and everywhere surrounded by rugged mountains, except towards the sea. The upper end was closed by a precipice, several hundred feet in height, from which fell a stream of water forming a beautiful cascade, which, meandering through the valley, discharged itself into the sea at the beach where they first landed. Villages were scattered here and there, interspersed with bread fruit and cocoa nut trees, which flourished in great luxuriance. Well ordered plantations surrounded by stone walls dotted the landscape here and there. Everything indicated industry, abundance and happiness, and no wonder that Capt. Porter felt great repugnance against the necessity which compelled him to make war against this happy and heroic people.

Perhaps, some may censure Capt. Porter's conduct; may question his motives, and deny the necessity which compelled him to war against the Typees; but when we reflect on his peculiar situation, with a handful of men among numerous warlike tribes, who kept faith only when it seemed to be their interest to do so, we can readily perceive from what had already occurred, that he had either to attack the Typees or be attacked by them, and a

constant warfare be maintained while he stayed at the island. The Typees had positively refused to be on friendly terms with the Americans, and had abused and insulted their friends whenever an opportunity offered; and the latter were anticipating further ill treatment, when the ships should depart from the island.

Hostilities had now commenced, and the Typees believed they had obtained a great advantage, an idea which was somewhat shared in by the other tribes. A mere shadow of a treaty connected him with the others, which, once broken, his destruction was inevitable, unless the sailors could manage to retreat to their ships and sail away, leaving future Americans who should visit the island to suffer for their want of courage. As long as the natives believed them invincible, they would be their friends; as soon as their power and valor were doubted, instead of war with the Typees, they would have to contend with the whole island. The Happahs considered themselves a conquered tribe, and the others, if not conquered by American arms, were so by the apprehension of them. If they were once satisfied that the Typees could keep the sailors at bay, they would have considered the united force of the islanders strong enough to drive the Americans into the sea. A coalition against the Americans would have been fatal, and it was necessary, in Porter's judgment, to bring on a conflict before the Typees could come to an understanding with the other tribes. By placing all on the same footing, he hoped to bring about a general peace and secure the future tranquility of the island.

However Porter might regret the harshness with which, from motives of self preservation, he was compelled to treat this high-spirited people, his conscience acquitted him of any injustice; and no excesses were committed, except what the Typees had it in their power to stop by a cessation of hostilities. Had they wished for peace, they need never have had war; but proud of their reputation as the greatest warriors on the island, they believed themselves invincible, and hoped to insult all others with impunity. It is the history of savages the world over; they must be made to feel the strong hand of power, and their vicious instincts are only controlled by the presence of a superior force.

Perhaps, they could have advanced equally strong arguments with Porter to justify their own proceedings; the strongest of which was, that they had an inalienable right to the soil, and the invader had no business on the island.

While the Americans were looking at the beautiful valley, which lay at their feet, a large assemblage of Typee warriors, posted on the opposite bank of the river which ran near the foot of the mountains, dared them to descend. In the rear of the strongly posted force of warriors, was a fortified village, encompassed by strong stone walls. Drums and conchs were sounding in all directions, and the Typees were evidently making every effort to give their assailants a warm reception. Mouina now offered to lead as a guide, and the party descended the mountain, almost as difficult a feat as the ascent. On reaching the foot of the mountain the Americans were saluted with showers of stones from the bushes and from behind the stone walls, but as they were now able to shelter themselves, no notice was taken of the attack, as they could not afford to waste any ammunition. After resting a few moments on the bank of the river, the scouting parties were directed to cross, and were followed by the main body. Notwithstanding the Americans were much annoyed by stones, the village was taken without loss, before the entire party were over, while the chief warrior and another Typee were killed, and several lay wounded on the ground. The natives retreated to stone walls built on higher ground, whence they continued to sling stones and hurl spears, and three of the sailors were wounded and many Typees killed before they were dislodged.

Parties were sent in different directions to scour the woods, and another fort was taken after some resistance; but the attacking party, overpowered by numbers, were obliged to retreat to the main body, after keeping possession half an hour. The main body awaited, in the fort first taken, the return of the scouting parties, while a multitude of Taeehs and Happahs, who had now appeared on the scene, were searching around for plunder.

Lieut. McKnight was in possession of a strong wall, from which he had driven the enemy, when a large body

of Typees rushed from their ambush, past his fire, and into the fort. All the Taeehs and Happahs took to their heels. The Typees approached within pistol shot, but on the first fire from the sailors retreated precipitately, crossing the fire of Mr. McKnight's party, and although none of the enemy were killed, it was thought that many were wounded. The spears and stones were flying from the bushes in every direction, and although many of the Typees were killed and wounded, it was evident that the Americans would have to fight their way all through the valley, since the Typees showed an indomitable courage. As it was feared the ammunition would run short, the scouting parties were exhorted to be more careful; and firing was forbidden from the main body, unless it was attacked by great numbers.

A party of sailors was now left to guard the wounded, and look after a band of natives in ambush, and Mouina was directed to lead the main body to the next village; but before marching, Capt. Porter sent a message to the Typees that he would cease hostilities when they no longer made resistance. No notice was taken of the message, and the march was continued up the valley, past several beautiful villages which were set on fire, until the chief village was reached, which really deserved the name of capital. The Americans had been obliged to contest every foot of ground, and at the capital met with renewed opposition; but the place was soon carried, and Captain Porter reluctantly gave the order to set fire to it. The beauty and regularity of this village struck the Americans with astonishment, and the public square was finer than anything yet seen in the island. Among the articles here destroyed were several large and elegant new war canoes, a large number of drums, and some of the native gods; while the allies loaded themselves with plunder, after destroying large quantities of bread fruit trees and young plants.

The party had now arrived at the upper end of the valley, about nine miles from the beach, and at the foot of the waterfall formerly mentioned. The day was advancing, and it was necessary to hasten their return to the fort first taken, which they reached after an absence of four hours, leaving behind them a scene of desolation.

It was hoped that the Typees would abandon the idea of further resistance; but, on his return to the fort, Capt. Porter found that the party left there had been annoyed during the whole time of his absence, but being short of ammunition, and sheltered from the stones, they had not fired on the natives. This fort was situated exactly half way up the valley. To return the way they had come, would have been impossible, it was therefore necessary to keep on down to the beach, where it was represented that the difficulty of ascending the mountains would not be so great. Many of the men were exhausted with fatigue and hunger, and a halt was ordered that all might rest and refresh themselves after their hard day's work.

In half an hour, the line of march was formed, and they proceeded down the valley, destroying several villages on the route, at all of which places they met with continued resistance from the Typees. At one point the latter rolled great stones down, with a view to crush the invaders, but did not succeed in doing them any harm. In all, ten villages were destroyed, and a great amount of plunder was carried off by the native *allies*, as they called themselves, for the Americans were too busy fighting to prevent them, if it had been possible to do so. The Typees fought to the last, and even attempted to harass the rear as it returned towards the beach; but, by leaving parties in ambush to attack them, they soon ceased to annoy.

When the party arrived at the formidable fort, which had checked their career on their first campaign against the Typees, all were surprised at the magnitude and beauty of the work. It was about fifty yards in extent, forming the segment of a circle, and was built of stones, six feet thick at the bottom, and gradually narrowing at the top to give strength and stability. On the left, was an entrance, barely wide enough to admit one person, and serving as a sally port. To enter this from the outside, it was necessary to pass directly under the wall for one-half its length, as an impenetrable thicket prevented the approach in any other direction. The wings and rear were equally guarded, and the right was flanked by another fortification, of equal strength and ingenuity. It will be seen from this, that the Typees were good engineers as well as strategists and fighters.

In their fortifications consisted the strength of the Typees; their usual fighting place with the other tribes, was the plain near the beach, and although they had frequently fought the combined forces of several tribes, these had never succeeded in compelling the Typees to retire beyond the river, which was a quarter of a mile from the fort.

Thus ended the expedition against the Typees. On his arrival at the beach, Capt. Porter met the Shouemes with a white flag, and full of professions, together with the principal chief of the Happahs, who could not do too much for his American allies. Gattanewa met his friend Opotee as he was ascending the hill side. The old chief's heart was too full for utterance; he placed both the Captain's hands on his head, rested his own forehead on his knees, reminding him that they had exchanged names.

Like many another conqueror, Porter could not help a feeling of regret as he saw from the top of the mountain, the scene of desolation he had left behind him—where in the morning all was abundance and happiness—now a line of smoking ruins marked the path of the invader, from one end of the valley to the other. The opposite hills were covered with the unhappy fugitives, and horror and destruction were on every hand. It was on a small scale, but such a scene as many of us have witnessed in late years, and which impresses itself on the mind in vivid colors, that time cannot efface.

The brave Typees deserved a better fate, though they were the victims of their own mistaken pride, and while the instruments of their punishment pitied their misfortunes, thousands of their own countrymen exulted in their distress, showing that sympathy is an element that is only cultivated by the refining influence of civilization.

The party reached the camp quite exhausted with fatigue, having traveled, for three days and a half, over mountainous roads, and passing over a distance of upwards of sixty miles. Many of the strongest men had given out completely and Corporal Mahan died of over exertion, two days after his return.

The next day a messenger was sent to inform the Typees that Capt. Porter was still inclined to make peace, and would not allow them to return to their valley, until they

agreed to terms of friendship. The messenger, on his return, reported that the Typees were in great consternation, and desired nothing so much as peace; and were willing to pay any price for the friendship of the Americans. They promised to send a flag of truce next day. When the flag arrived, the Captain insisted only on a compliance with the conditions formerly offered, namely, an exchange of presents and peace with all the tribes, to which the Typees readily agreed, and wished to know how many hogs were wanted, as they had lost but few, and should be able to furnish abundant supplies. Four hundred hogs were required, for which they were compensated with the customary presents.

All the chiefs on the island now sent in large presents of provisions, and at no time were the Americans so abundantly supplied. Many of the hogs were left in the valley with the Taeehs, when the Essex departed, as a compensation for those which these people had formerly supplied to the Americans.

The utmost harmony now prevailed throughout the island, between the natives and the Americans, and also between the different tribes, and all met at the American village in the most friendly manner; the chiefs and priests of the tribes making daily visits to head quarters; all were pleased, and the defeated natives, like children, soon forgot their griefs. It was a pleasure to the natives to know that they could now go anywhere unmolested, and many of the oldest men assured the Americans, that they had never before been out of the valley in which they were born. They repeatedly expressed their astonishment, that Captain Porter should have been able to extend his influence so far, in so short a time, as not only to give them complete protection in the valley of Tienhoy, but also among tribes with whom they had been at war from the earliest period.

Captain Porter informed the natives that he should shortly leave them, and would return again at the end of a year, and would punish any of them whom he found at war; but all assured him of their purpose to remain on good terms with the Americans, and with one another.

The chiefs and principal persons of the different tribes

affected to be very solicitous of forming a relationship with Porter, by exchanging names with some of his family. Some wished to bear the name of a brother, or brother-in-law, or son, and when the stock of masculine names was exhausted, they were anxious to adopt those of the other sex. The name of his son was, however, most in demand, and many venerable savages were honored by the euphonious appellation of "Pickaneenee Opotee," the word Pickaneenee having been introduced among them by the sailors of ships, that had touched at the island.

Thus ended the Typee war, which if it cannot be ranked with the invasion of Cortez, formed at least an interesting episode in the cruise of the Essex; and many of the incidents of the campaign are spoken of, to this day, by the islanders; having been handed down, by tradition, from father to son.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE refitting of the Essex, and the loading of the New Zealander with oil, from the Greenwich, Seringapatam, and Hammond, now rapidly progressed; and on the 9th of December, 1813, all the provisions, wood and water were on board. The decks were filled with hogs, cocoa nuts, and bananas, with which they had been furnished by their Nookaheevan friends, who seemed anxious that the Americans should want for nothing, that it was in their power to supply. While the ships had been lying in Massachusetts bay, many connexions had been made between the sailors and the fair ones on shore; and the former really regretted their approaching departure from a people, at whose hands they had received so much kindness, which does not often fall to the lot of a man-of-war's man.

Captain Porter now found it necessary to restrict the liberty, which had heretofore been so freely allowed; and gave orders that every one should remain on board, working late and early, for he was extremely anxious to get to sea. Notwithstanding these orders, three of the crew (determining to have a parting interview with the young women whom they had enshrined in their hearts), swam ashore in the night, and were arrested on the beach and brought back to the ship; for knowing the character of sailors so well, the Captain had taken extra precautions to have his orders carried out. The unfortunate Leanders were at once placed in irons, and the Captain determined to check further disobedience by inflicting on them exemplary punishment; so next morning, after giving them a lecture in regard to the impropriety of their conduct, and their meanness in making so poor a return for the many indulgences granted them, the culprits were set to work with their irons on with the English prisoners, the Captain not wishing to resort to corporeal punishment, and sorry that circumstances required any punishment whatever. This severity excited some discontent among the crew, many of whom would have committed the same offense had opportunity offered; but this, the punishment of their three shipmates, effectually prevented.

Nookaheevah had many attractions for a sailor, and had part of the crew felt disposed to remain there (which was very probable), they would have seized the opportunity to desert, just before the time set for the ships to sail. As it was, the only desertion was that of a lazy negro taken on board at Tumbez, and who was not missed until the Essex got to sea.

This swimming affair came very near causing serious trouble, for the sailors did not see the same necessity for remaining on board, on the eve of sailing as did their captain. Like most persons who have been treated with great indulgence, they became discontented, a feeling which can very soon be detected in a ship's crew. They stood about the decks in groups with gloomy countenances, and when called to duty did not move with their usual alacrity. The girls lined the beach from morning until night, constantly importuning the captain to take the *taboo* off

the men; and laughingly expressing their grief by dipping their fingers into the sea water and touching their black eyes. Others would hold a chip, in the manner of a shark's tooth, threatening to cut themselves to pieces in despair; some threatened to beat their brains out with a blade of grass, and others to drown themselves if their sweethearts were not permitted to go on shore. This was all very tantalizing to the men, who did not bear the separation philosophically. They said their situation was worse than slavery, and one Robert White declared on board the Essex junior, that the frigate's crew did not intend to weigh the anchor; or if compelled to get the ship underway, they would hoist their own flag in three days time. Such a thing was by no means improbable, under great temptation, and the mutiny on board H. M. ship Bounty, is a case in point. The sailor's life is a hard one, and it is seldom that he falls into such a pleasant place as Nookaheeva with its beautiful groves and lithesome houris.

With such a variety of characters as compose the crew of a ship of war, only the most energetic measures will avail, and when the report of White's speech was brought to Capt. Porter, he determined to take immediate action in the matter. As long as the men confined themselves to grumbling he thought it very natural; but a threat of this kind he could not tolerate. All hands were mustered and after explaining to them the necessity for getting the ship ready for sea with all dispatch, he informed them that this was the sole cause of their deprivation of liberty, which was by no means intended as a punishment, since their conduct had merited his entire approbation. He then pointed out to them the serious consequences that would occur, if every man in the ship should follow the example of the three who had treated his orders with so much contempt. All seemed impressed with the Captain's remarks on the necessity of strict subordination. He then informed the men of the report that had been circulated, and assured them that while he gave not the slightest credit to it he would in the event of such a thing put a match to the magazine, and blow all hands into eternity. But he added, "to see if there are any grounds for the report that some will refuse

to obey my orders, let those of you who are disposed to get the ship under way at the proper time, go over on the starboard side and those who are otherwise disposed remain where they are." All hands hastened to the starboard side. He now called for White, who had spread the report of the intended mutiny, and he tremblingly advanced. Capt. Porter informed the crew that this was the man who had spread reports so injurious to their character, and indignation was marked on every countenance. The Captain then directed the rascal to get into a native canoe, that happened to be passing, and never to let him see his face again; and amid the contemptuous sneers of the sailors White departed, and that was the last they ever saw of him.

This was a delicate affair to manage, and none but one who thoroughly understood the character of sailors could have so easily disposed of it. It must be borne in mind that when these events were taking place the navy was not as it is now, an old established branch of the government, and the authority of its officers was by no means so well defined as at present. There were many Englishmen in the service, who not too good to fight against their own flag, would probably not mind changing the one under which they temporarily served to another suited to the career of free rovers. Mutinies have occurred in the British navy, and there was no reason why they might not happen in that of the United States, considering the peculiar temptations of Nookaheevah.

The women of that island were more comely and attractive than was generally the case at the other islands, and some of them had formed strong attachments to members of the crew, which though not lasting were sincere at the time, particularly on the part of the men; for the women were apt to be unfaithful, whenever a new object attracted their love or cupidity. It is said, to excuse their conduct, that these women did not seem sensible they were doing any injury to their lovers. They were often inconstant in retaliation on some of their female acquaintance, and if the truth must be told they were always flattered by any preference for them, and this preference, together with the present of a whale's tooth, could at any time purchase

the favors of the most exclusive; for whale's teeth to them were what diamonds are to the sex in the civilized world.

The Nookaheevans were arrant flirts, and having received a present they were so anxious to parade it and also to show their power over the donor, as to lose sight of, or not to care for the interpretation that might be put upon the adventure. In time a report would come to the ears of the lady who innocently supposed that *she* had a claim to the present; this produced an act of retaliation on her part, not to injure her lover, but to mortify the woman who had infringed on her prerogatives. Yet with all these little infelicities, we hear of no serious difficulties; though, it is said, that the Nookaheevan women, in spite of their own laxity of conduct, watch their lovers as carefully as a jealous Spaniard does his wife. But love is one of the refinements of civilization, and it is unlikely that a savage can really feel this absorbing passion, as it is felt by the heart of educated man or woman.

What we understand as virtue, was unknown in Nookaheevah. The young girls are the wives of all who can purchase their favors, and a handsome daughter is a blessing that secures to her parents abundant wealth. From the ages of twelve to eighteen, the young girls rove at will, and this period of their lives is one of unrestrained pleasure. Their days are spent in dancing, singing and ornamenting their persons, to render themselves attractive in the eyes of those upon whom they indiscriminately bestow their favors, without shame or fear of consequences. No wonder the sailors did not wish to leave the island, but the example made of White brought them to their senses; and though they loved the little Nookaheevan girls they did not care sufficiently for them to forsake ship, pay, and prize money on their account; and, perchance, the remembrance of some black eyed Susan was at that moment swaying away upon the sailor's heart strings.

All went cheerfully to duty, and the Seringapatam, Hammond and Greenwich were moored near the fort in charge of the marine officer Lieut. Gamble, who with Midshipman Feltus and twenty men volunteered to remain with the prizes, until the return of the frigate; or until further orders from Captain Porter; failing to receive these,

Lieut. Gamble was ordered to leave Nookaheevah in five and a half months. Mr. King was ordered to proceed, with the New Zealander, to the United States; and on the 9th of December, 1813, the Essex, Essex junior, and New Zealander weighed anchor, and put to sea bound for Valparaiso.

The residence of Capt. Porter among the Nookaheevans, had given him an excellent opportunity of investigating the character and habits of that interesting people, who possessed so many excellent qualities that he became much attached to them; but the limits of our work preclude the possibility of enlarging on this topic, and the people must be judged by the incidents which have been narrated in the preceding pages.

Sixty years ago the inhabitants of Nookaheevah were estimated at 65,000, of which 19,000 were capable of bearing arms. They were almost in a state of nature, having had little intercourse with the outside world, and had little knowledge of the vices and habits which have since done so much to demoralize these ingenuous islanders. Their guileless faces then shone with good nature and intelligence, presenting a strong contrast to the Sandwich islanders and Tahitans, who had already become corrupted by their intercourse with the white man. The Nookaheevans have now become sensible of their guilt, in what in their primitive state was not considered wrong, and it is marked in their countenances by a sullen look which characterizes these islanders after living under the oppressive rule of foreigners.

After dwindling away to a population of 9000, the natives of the Washington islands in the year 1842, placed themselves under the protection of the French; still retaining many of the good qualities they were said to possess in 1813, and exhibiting in their great size and beauty of form, that likeness to the classic sculptures which has been before remarked.

Captain Porter's account of the inhabitants of the Washington islands, is, perhaps, the most interesting that has appeared. His opportunities for observation were unusually good; and his habits of observation and powers of description, well qualified him for the task.

CHAPTER XV.

IT is not necessary to describe the voyage of the Essex and Essex junior to Valparaiso, in which port the frigate came to anchor on the 3d of February, when salutes and visits were exchanged with the authorities. The Essex Junior was directed to cruise off the port, to intercept any of the enemy's merchant vessels, and to give warning of the approach of British ships of war; and, in the meantime, every effort was made to get the Essex ready for sea. The hospitality of the people of Valparaiso seemed to increase, and as a return for their kindness and the disappointment they had experienced on a former occasion, Captain Porter, on the evening of the 7th, invited the governor, the officials and their families, together with the principal citizens, to an entertainment on board the frigate. Lieut. Downes was directed to anchor his vessel, but in such a position as would give him a full view of the sea. The dancing continued until midnight, when Lieut. Downes left the frigate and proceeded to sea in his vessel. The awnings and flags which had been used to decorate the Essex had not been taken down, and the usual scene of confusion which follows such affairs on shipboard prevailed, when the Essex junior signalled: "Two enemy's ships in sight." One-half the frigate's crew was ashore on liberty, but they were immediately summoned on board by signal; and, after ordering the ship prepared for action, Captain Porter went outside in the Essex junior to reconnoitre the two vessels, both of which appeared to be frigates. The Essex junior was ordered to take a position near the frigate, where the two ships could mutually support each other, and the Captain returned to the Essex where he found the ship completely prepared for action, and every officer and man at his post in just an hour and a half after the enemy's ships were sighted.

At 8 A. M., the British ships, fully prepared for action, entered the harbor; the larger vessel (which proved to be

the frigate Phœbe, Captain Hillyar), ranging up along side of the Essex, and between her and the Essex junior. Captain Hillyar politely enquired after Captain Porter's health, to which a courteous response was given. These officers were old acquaintances in the Mediterranean, and Captain Porter had spent many pleasant hours with Captain Hillyar and his family at Gibraltar. Captain Hillyar was in fact greatly esteemed by the American officers, and at one time, during his absence, his family placed themselves under the protection of Commodore Rogers, who conveyed them from Malta to Gibraltar, where they joined Captain H.

Finding that the Phœbe was approaching nearer the Essex than a strict neutrality justified him in permitting, Captain Porter called out to Capt. Hillyar, that he was prepared for action, but would only act on the defensive; whereupon, Hillyar, leaning over the side, answered in a careless, indifferent manner: "Oh sir, I have no intention of getting on board of you;" and being again warned that if he did fall foul of the Essex, there would be much blood shed. Hillyar nonchalantly, repeated his assurance that he had no such intention. Finding, however, that the Englishman luffed up so that he caused his ship to get aback, whereby the Phœbe's jib boom came across the Essex's forecastle, Captain Porter called away the boarders, directing them if the ships' hulls touched, to spring upon the deck of the English frigate.

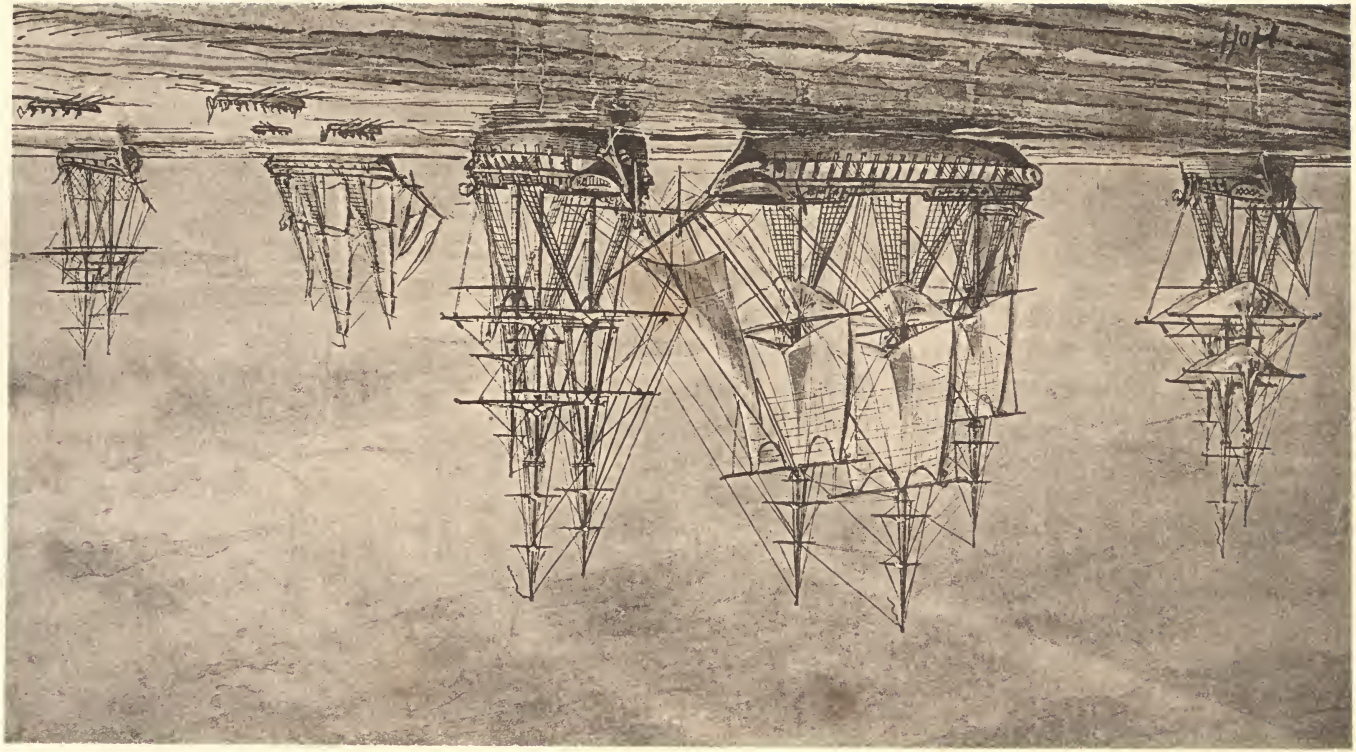
At this moment, not a gun from the Phœbe could be brought to bear on either the Essex or the Essex junior, while her bow was exposed to the raking fire of one, and her stern to the raking fire of the other; and her consort, the Cherub of 23 guns, was too far to leeward to afford any assistance. The consternation on board the English frigate was very great, when it was seen that every officer and man on board the Essex, was armed with a cutlass and brace of pistols, ready to jump on board, while the guns were trained to fire as occasion might require. Capt. Hillyar had been informed, by the boat of an English ship in port, that the American frigate was in great confusion from an entertainment, and that most of her men were on shore; so on witnessing this unexpected prepara-

tion for his reception, the English captain protested with great vehemence that he had no intention of boarding the Essex; that it was altogether an accident, that his ship had been taken aback, that he was exceedingly sorry, &c., &c.

The temptation to destroy the Phœbe, which was completely at his mercy, was very great, and Captain Porter would have been amply justified in sinking the English frigate, on the plea of self defense, but the assurances of Captain Hillyar disarmed him, and Captain Porter missed the opportunity which he never should have lost. He hailed Lieut. Downes and told him not to commence hostilities without orders, as it was his intention to let Captain Hillyar extricate himself. The Phœbe accordingly separated from the Essex, drifted by the two ships exposed to their raking fire, and anchored on the eastern side of the harbor, within range of her long 18 pounders, but beyond the range of the Essex's carronades. The Cherub came to anchor within pistol shot of the Essex's larboard bow, whereupon the Essex junior was moored to place the Cherub between her fire and that of the Essex, an arrangement that gave great umbrage to Captain Tucker, the commander of the Cherub.

The government officials and people of Valparaiso were much surprised at Captain Porter's forbearance, in not destroying the British frigate when at his mercy, after her evident attempt to violate the neutrality of the port; but Capt. Porter assured them that he always had and always should respect the neutrality of the port, unless attacked, and although subsequent events proved that Captain Hillyar was incapable of similar forbearance, yet Porter never regretted the course he pursued, in permitting the English frigate to escape, when he had her completely in his power.

It is pleasant to see the courtesies of life maintained, even between the citizens of nations at war with each other, for there is no reason why gentlemen bred to arms, should not practice those little civilities which tend to soften asperities, and often to ameliorate the condition of captives. The day after their arrival, Capts. Hillyar and Tucker called on Capt. Porter, at the house of Mr. Blanco, where he was staying, and were received with the courtesy which was a part of his nature. Not wishing to be outdone in



politeness, Capt. Porter returned the visit and a friendly intimacy was soon established, not only between the commanders, but also between the officers and men of the respective ships. Judging from appearances, no one would have suspected the two nations were at war, the conduct of the English and Americans towards each other bore so much the appearance of friendly alliance. At their first interview, Capt. Porter enquired of Capt. Hillyar whether he intended to respect the neutrality of the port, to which that officer replied with much feeling: "*You* have paid so much respect to the neutrality of the port that I feel bound in honor to respect it," an answer which was very gratifying to the American, as he would not now have to be continually on his guard or prepared for action.

Soon after the British vessels arrived in port, the Phœbe hoisted a flag containing the motto: "God and Country, British Sailors' best Rights, Traitors offend both," which was an answer, Capt. Hillyar said, to the motto of the Essex "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights," which had given great offense to the British navy.

The second time the Phœbe's flag was displayed, a flag appeared at the mast head of the Essex, bearing the inscription: "God, our Country and Liberty, Tyrants offend Them." Three cheers followed on the part of the Phœbe's crew, which were returned from the Essex. The incident was taken good naturedly by Capt. Hillyar; and on their next meeting he and Capt. Porter talked over amicably the object of the former in coming to the Pacific, his long hunt after the Essex and his desire to know what Porter intended to do with his prizes, &c. Capt. Porter informed Hillyar, that whenever he sent away the Cherub, he intended to go to sea, and would take the first opportunity, when the Essex could meet the Phœbe alone, of testing the force of the two ships; that as the Essex was much the smaller vessel of the two, he did not feel justified in challenging the Phœbe to fight, but that if Capt. Hillyar would send away the Cherub, he would have no hesitation in engaging him.

To these and similar utterances, the British captain would reply, that the results of naval actions were very uncertain, as they depended on many contingencies, and

that the loss of a mast or spar often turned the fate of the day. He observed, that notwithstanding the inferiority of the Essex, if she could get to close quarters, she would do great execution with her carronades. On the whole, therefore, he should trust to circumstances to bring the ships together, as he was not disposed to yield the advantage of superior force, which would effectually blockade the Essex until other ships arrived, and at all events prevent her doing further damage to British commerce. Capt. Porter told him as regarded the prizes they were an incumbrance, and he intended to take them to sea on the first opportunity, and burn them. Hillyar dared him to do it, while he was in sight, to which the other replied, "we will see."

It was soon ascertained, beyond a doubt, that Captain Hillyar was determined to yield none of the advantages of his superior force, and as there were other British vessels of war expected in the Pacific, the arrival of which in Valparaiso would effectually blockade the Essex, Capt. Porter determined to use every means of provoking Hillyar to single combat with the Phœbe.

As the Cherub laid quite near the Essex, the crews of the two vessels amused themselves by singing songs at each other, selecting those most appropriate to their situation and feelings, some of them of their own composition. Yankee Doodle was the vehicle through which the sailors of the Essex in full chorus conveyed their sarcasms, while Dibdin's Poor Jack was generally selected as a tune by their rivals. These amusements were not only tolerated, but encouraged by the officers through the whole of the first watch of the calm, delightful nights of Chili, much to the amusement of the people of Valparaiso and the crews of the other ships. At length Capt. Hillyar requested Capt. Porter to put a stop to this practice, which the latter declined to do while the singing continued on board the Cherub. As a sample of the *poetry* manufactured by the sailors at that time, we give the following, which was sung for the benefit of the Phœbe and Cherub.

Ye tars of our country, who seek on the main,
The cause for the wrongs your country sustain,
Rejoice and be merry, for bragging John Bull
Has got a sound drubbing from brave Captain Hull.

The bold Constitution, a ship of some fame,
Sure each jolly tar must remember her name,
On the 19th of August, o'ertook the Guerriere,
A frigate once captured by John from Monseer.

At five past meridian, the action begun,
It was before John had learned from our frigates to run,
So he backed his main top sail so tickled to find,
A Yankee for fighting so stoutly inclined.

Proud Dacres commanded the enemy's ship,
Who often had promised the Yankees to whip,
But it seems he had reckoned without his good host,
As he found on that hot, bloody day to his cost.

That boasting commander his crew first addressed,
It was partly made up of Americans pressed;
Says he, "my brave boys, see our wish is fulfilled,
For 'tis better to capture a ship than to build."

"And you who are tired of our boatswain's whip,
And sigh to return to some vile Yankee ship,
Ten minutes or less of our fierce British fire,
Will give me that ship and give you your desire."

Our drum beat to quarters, each jolly tar hears,
And hails the glad tidings with three hearty cheers;
All eager for battle, to quarters they fly,
Resolving to conquer that ship or to die.

So at it we went in a deluge of fire,
Each party too stubborn an inch to retire;
Balls, grape shot and langridge promiscuously fly,
While the thunder of cannon fills ocean and sky.

At a quarter past five, our shot told so well
That the enemy's mizzen mast tottered and fell,
And while eager to board, for orders we wait,
Her foremast and mainmast shared the same fate.

Our cabin had now from his shot taken fire,
Yet danger but kindled our courage the higher,
'Twas quickly extinguished, and Dacres' lee gun
Proclaimed his ship ours, and the bloody fight done.

The prize then we boarded all armed in a boat,
We found her so riddled she'd scarce keep afloat,
Fifteen of her seamen lay dead in their gore,
And wounded and dying were sixty-four more.

Our loss was but seven, Heaven rest their brave souls,
For over their bodies the green ocean rolls,
And seven who wounded will long live to tell,
How they got their brave scars which become them so well.

Huzza for the can boys, come give us a pull,
Let's drink a full bucket to brave Captain Hull,
And when next to meet us, the enemy dare,
God grant in his mercy that we may be there.

The English songs were fully up to the above standard, but unfortunately it is out of our power to produce any of them. It was not likely that these songs would tend to maintain the good feeling which had previously existed, and in fact they eventually led to some bitterness. The people of Valparaiso, who could hear all these songs from the hillsides, enjoyed them amazingly, and would have been as much pleased to see the frigates join in battle, as to witness their national sport of bull fighting, regardless of the number of killed and wounded that might result from such an encounter.

While these sarcastic compliments were being passed around, one of the prisoners on board the Essex junior jumped overboard, and in spite of every effort made by the Americans to prevent it, he was picked up by a boat from the Cherub and carried in triumph on board that vessel. This incident led to a racy correspondence between Captains Porter and Hillyar, in which was shown some asperity on both sides, the first that had been manifested since the meeting of these officers. Captain Porter considered that Hillyar had violated his pledge in permitting the rescue of the prisoner, but on the whole it was not an unfair transaction, as the British officer could not with propriety give him up. The precedent could only be advantageous to the Essex, predisposed as were the British sailors to desert at every opportunity. Notwithstanding the correspondence, the next interview between Captains Porter and Hillyar was friendly, and the former made a

proposition to put all his prisoners on board one of the prizes without a cargo, and send her to England, there to take an equal number of American prisoners, and proceed with them to the United States. Captain Hillyar expressed some doubt as to the propriety of this arrangement, and referred to a similar agreement made with the captain of the Alert. In the course of conversation, he adverted to certain reports that had been circulated, accusing Capt. Porter of maltreating his prisoners, saying that these stories had made a bad impression upon British officers, and would tend to make the condition of American prisoners very uncomfortable hereafter. Captain Porter therefore felt it due to his own honor, and to that of his country, to set this matter right at once, and he accordingly wrote to Captain Hillyar a letter, which, with that officer's answer, is here inserted.

'U. S. Frigate Essex,
Valparaiso, 23d Feb., 1814.

Sir: As you have expressed some doubts respecting the correctness of an arrangement, proposed by me, for the disposal of the prisoners of war on board the ships under my command; and as those doubts were occasioned by a communication made by Admiral Duckworth, to the secretary of the navy of the United States, of which you had not a perfect recollection, I have done myself the honor to transmit a copy of a letter from the department, containing an extract from the aforesaid communication, by which you will be enabled to judge whether the objections made by the admiral, can be here applied.

I also do myself the honor to send you the copy of a letter from the admiral to myself, as well as several other communications of a private nature, and beg you to restore the originals after you have perused, and (if you think them of sufficient importance) taken a copy of them.

I have been induced to do this, from a wish to remove certain impressions which have been made on the public mind highly prejudicial to the character of an American officer; and I assure you, although I have endeavored to perform and shall continue to do my duty to my country to the utmost of my abilities, I disdain a mean and dishonorable act, whatever advantages may result from it. It has been my study to alleviate the miseries of war and I have been rewarded in most instances with the basest ingratitude.

British boats, with British subjects on board, daily pass and repass between the shore and the ships under your command when far

beyond the jurisdiction of this port. It has frequently been in my power to cut them off; but I have not done so, under the persuasion that American boats, under similar circumstances would be permitted by you to pass unmolested. I beg you to inform me, whether my opinion is correct?

I have the honor to be, &c.

Captain James Hillyar, &c., &c. D. PORTER.

H. B. M. Ship Phœbe,
Off Valparaiso 24th Feb., 1814.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of yesterday, with its inclosures, and I beg you will accept my thanks for the trouble you have taken. The copy of Sir John Duckworth's letter and the extracts accompanying it, confirm me in my opinion, that the cases are too nearly similar to justify my acceding to your proposition of sending one of your prizes as a cartel, and the British government would certainly disapprove of the act.

The letters from your prisoners must be highly gratifying to your personal feelings, and I hope the individuals who have benefitted by your humane attentions, will feel themselves bound in honor to rescue your character from every unjust and illiberal aspersion.

I certainly could have no objection to American boats passing in the way British do to us, under similar circumstances. They have all the governor's permission.

I must now appeal to your humanity, and repeat to you how anxious I am for the sufferings of my countrymen at present your prisoners — and express my request that you will liberate them here, as the only expedient I can think of. If you accede to it I pledge myself that they shall not be permitted to serve on board any of his majesty's ships, under my orders; and I will write immediately to the British government, that an equal number of Americans may be restored to their country.

I have availed myself of your permission to copy some of the papers, and have taken the names of those who have acknowledged your goodness to them. The liberal minded will always do you justice — and a much higher reward awaits the performance of every Christian duty to an afflicted fellow creature.

I have the honor to be &c.,

David Porter, Esqr., &c., &c. JAMES HILLYAR.

From the above correspondence it will be seen, that the two English ships had gone to cruise off the port. The circumstances of their going to sea were as follows. A signal from the Spanish telegraph on the hill, announced

a sail in the offing, and the morning being calm, the Essex junior was ordered to go in pursuit in tow of the frigate's boats. After reconnoitering the vessel, which proved to be an English storeship, the Phœbe and Cherub made all sail with the intention of cutting off the Essex junior from the harbor which they were near effecting, but for the Essex's boats which towed the ship back to her former anchorage. On the 25th of February Capt. Porter sent a flag of truce on board the Phœbe with the following note:

U. S. Frigate Essex,
Valparaiso 25th Feb., 1814.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday, and agreeably to your request and assurances, immediately liberated, on parole, the British prisoners who were on board the vessels under my command. Their obligation, as well as a certificate of their liberation, are herewith enclosed.

My feelings have been greatly roused by the scandalous reports which have been circulated respecting my conduct, yet I hope I shall always have sufficient control over myself, to prevent any change in my conduct towards those whom the fortune of war may place in my power; for though such a change might be just, it would not be generous. I fear I have done injury to my country and my fellow citizens, by the practice of liberating British subjects who have fallen into my hands before they were exchanged, but the purity of my intentions was evident to Admiral Duckworth, and so long as my country does not disapprove of this mode, I hope I may be the means of averting some of those evils incident to captivity.

I have the honor to be, &c., D. PORTER.

Captain James Hillyar, &c., &c.

About this time, desiring to ascertain the comparative rate of sailing between his own and the British ships, and choosing a favorable opportunity when the enemy were to leeward of the port and could not cut him off, Capt. Porter got underway, and let the Phœbe and Cherub chase him. He soon ascertained that the Essex had greatly the advantage, and felt satisfied that he could at any time make his escape; but he did not abandon the hope of bringing the frigate to an engagement, and he endeavored to control his impatience to depart, while he tried in every way to provoke his adversary to single combat.

On the 14th of February, it being calm and the two

British ships far in the offing, Capt. Porter towed the Hector, one of his prizes to sea, and when within reach of the enemy's guns, set fire to her and made his escape, in spite of every effort to cut him off.

On the afternoon of the 27th the Phœbe stood in towards the harbor, hoisted her flag containing the answer to the motto, "Free trade and sailors' rights," hove to, and fired a gun to windward. This was considered by everyone on board the Essex as a challenge, and Captain Porter did not hesitate to accept it. The frigate's motto was run up, a gun fired, and the Essex, slipping her cables, got underway, and stood out after the Phœbe. Valparaiso was all excitement and the hills were covered with people, among whom were many women all anxious to witness an engagement. The Phœbe stood off shore as the Essex stood out, under press of sail, and the latter was fast closing with her antagonist, when, to the astonishment of every one, the British frigate bore up before the wind and joined her consort. Captain Porter was naturally indignant at this conduct, after having been invited to a contest with the Phœbe, and ordered two shots fired ahead of the latter to bring her to, but she continued on her course. When the Phœbe joined the Cherub, both gave chase to the Essex, and after the latter had anchored came into the harbor together.

This affair was discussed in Valparaiso, and surprise was expressed that the Phœbe had not availed herself of the opportunity offered. Capt. Porter himself warmly expressed his dissatisfaction at Capt. Hillyar's course, and his remarks reached that officer's ears. A bad feeling was springing up, causing a very annoying state of affairs. The Cherub was now too far off to hear the songs of the Essex, but still feeling sore at some taunts of the latter's crew, on the subject of the late challenge, addressed some letters to them of a most insulting character, which were brought to Captain Porter. The latter thought this a good opportunity of rousing the British captain to offer battle in earnest, and accordingly addressed him the following letter:

U. S. Frigate Essex, 14th March, 1814.

Sir: The two enclosed papers have been handed to me by my ship's company, and were delivered to one of my seamen by a British

prisoner on parole as coming from your ship. One of my seamen has also assured me, that the crew of an English ship now in port, have showed him a letter bearing your signature, holding forth encouragement to my people, for deserting the cause in which they are now engaged. The style of the two papers is a sufficient evidence that they were not written by a common sailor. But, although I have received the most positive assurances respecting the latter, my knowledge of the character of Captain Hillyar, will not permit me to believe him capable of so base an expedient to effect the object of his cruise, notwithstanding the circumstances, and alleged object of the Phœbe's flag might induce a suspicion.

It appears that my ship's company have made some reply to the first of these papers; and it is highly probable that it was couched in the ordinary language of sailors. The most insulting epithets have been applied to them and in the most public manner. I have not, therefore, thought it proper to restrain that indignation my people have felt, in common with myself at such proceedings. Their character as well as my own, has been misunderstood; and if it is believed that we have wished to shake the loyalty of your seamen, I can positively assure you, our intentions have been equally misunderstood.

It is not necessary for us to resort to so pitiful an expedient, and were it necessary I should spurn it. My men are equally prepared with myself, to do our duty; they have given me innumerable proofs of their readiness at all times, to die in support of their country's cause; they have my unlimited confidence — I have theirs.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

Captain James Hillyar, &c., &c. D. PORTER.

To this missive Captain Hillyar returned a temperate reply, disclaiming the conduct attributed to him, retorting the charge of his men being the aggressors in the paper war, and hinting at various reports he had lately heard to the Captain's disadvantage. Several letters were interchanged, and while the commanders were engaged in a keen encounter of their wits, the crew of the hostile ships continued to carry on the war in poetry and prose, some of the poetical effusions of the British tars being so meritorious, as to induce a suspicion that they were the production of higher authority.

Shortly after this, the 1st lieutenant of the Phœbe came on board the Essex, under a flag of truce. Presuming that he was the bearer of another challenge, Capt. Porter required the presence of some of his officers to witness

the interview. The English officer stated that Capt. Hillyar had been informed, that Porter had accused him of acting in a cowardly manner, in running from the Essex after having challenged her. Capt. Porter admitted that he had said so, and still thought so, whereupon the officer stated, on the part of Capt. Hillyar, that the firing a gun and hoisting a flag was merely intended as a signal to the Cherub! Captain Porter replied, that Hillyar had informed him that the motto of the flag was intended as an answer to that of the Essex, and that there was not a soul in Valparaiso that did not think it a challenge. As the officer still continued his assurances, Captain Porter told him that he was bound to take Captain Hillyar's word if he said that he had not intended a challenge, but assured him that whenever Captain Hillyar thought proper to send away the Cherub, and perform a similar manœuvre he should consider it an invitation to battle; but the English officer said, that Hillyar being a religious man, did not approve of challenges. Some excitement grew out of this last affair, and Capt. Porter, not wishing to be accused of getting under way to perform an act of bravado, when he knew the English captain had determined to risk nothing in the performance of his duty, received from his officers the following certificates which belong to the history of that time.

"On Sunday the 27th February, 1814, at 5 P.M., the Phœbe ran close in with the harbor, hoisted an English ensign, bearing the motto, "God and our Country; British Sailors' Best Rights: Traitors Offend Them," and fired a gun to windward. The sloop-of-war was about two and a half miles to the leeward. The Essex immediately got underway, hoisted a flag bearing the motto, "God, Our Country and Liberty: Tyrants offend them," and fired a gun to windward. The Phœbe hove to until the Essex was within gun shot, when she bore up and ran down for the sloop of war. Two shots were fired across her bows to bring her to, but without effect. After chasing her as far as was prudent, Capt. Porter observed that their conduct was cowardly and dishonorable, and returned into port where we came to anchor.

John Downes	M. W. Bostwick
Wm. H. Odenheimer	Alex. Montgomery
Edward Barnewell	George W. Isaac
Richard K. Hoffman	S. L. Duzenbery.
John K. Shaw	

On the 16th of March, 1814, Lieut. Ingraham, first of the Phœbe, came on board the Essex, under a flag of truce, having a letter from Commodore Hillyar to Captain Porter. Lieut. Ingraham informed Captain Porter, that Commodore Hillyar had heard Captain P. had called him a coward for running away from the Essex, and begged to know if it was the case. Capt. Porter informed him that considering the circumstance of the challenge, and the conduct of the Phœbe in bearing up, he believed anything he could have said on the occasion justifiable. Lieut. Ingraham assured Captain Porter, that no challenge was intended, and that the gun was fired by accident. Capt. P. said he supposed it to be a challenge at that time, and had accepted it; and that he should accept another, if given by the Phœbe, observing, "it cannot be expected that I would take upon myself the responsibility of challenging a 36 gun frigate, with a frigate of 32 guns: as my country would censure me, should I prove unsuccessful; but the difference of force will not prevent my accepting a challenge given by Captain Hillyar.

The Phœbe and Cherub ever after, kept close together, and showed a determination of not risking an action, unless they could both engage the Essex.

JOHN DOWNES.

After these events the Phœbe and Cherub kept a close blockade, off the harbor, and an end was put to the paper war which had been carried on quite long enough. Capt. Porter not finding it likely that he should be able to bring the Phœbe to action singly, determined to put to sea on the first opportunity, and give the enemy the slip. His main object in departing was to avoid the Tagus 38, and two other frigates which had sailed for the Pacific in pursuit of him. The Raccoon was also expected from the N. W. coast, where she had been sent to destroy our fur establishments, on the Columbia river. A rendezvous was appointed for the Essex junior, and every arrangement made for sailing, and it was the Captain's intention to let the enemy chase him off the coast, to give the Essex junior a chance to escape.

On the 28th of March, 1814, the wind came on to blow fresh from the southward, when the Essex parted her larboard cable and dragged the starboard anchor directly to sea. Not a moment was lost in getting sail on the ship. The enemy were close in with the point, forming the west side of the bay, but on opening them, Captain Porter

thought he saw an opportunity to pass to the windward of them. On account of the freshness of the wind, he took in the top gallant sails which were set over single reefed topsails, but as she rounded the point the ship was struck by a heavy squall, which carried away the main top mast, throwing the men who were aloft into the sea where they were drowned.

The only thing now to be done, was to endeavor to regain the port, or else fight both the British ships in this crippled condition. Finding that the ship was too much disabled to beat up to the anchorage, Capt. Porter stood across the harbor and ran into a small bay about three quarters of a mile to leeward of the battery, on the east side of the harbor, where he anchored within pistol shot of the shore, intending to repair damages. The Essex was now about three miles from the town of Valparaiso, a mile and a half from Castle Viejo, and half a mile from a detached battery consisting of one 24 pounder.

It may here be remarked, that though the inhabitants of Valparaiso were still friendly to the Americans, the policy of the Chilian government had changed since the Essex's former visit, and they now favored the interests of the English on all occasions, in preference to those of our countrymen; and it is not unlikely that the Chilians acquiesced in the violation of the neutrality of the port, which shortly afterwards took place.

Notwithstanding the Essex had anchored within the limits of the harbor and close to the shore, the British ships continued to approach with the evident intention of attacking her regardless of the neutrality of the place. They had all their motto flags hoisted, and approached the crippled Essex so cautiously, that it looked as if they hardly thought it safe to attack her even in her disabled condition. The Americans, though still doubting if the British would be base enough to attack them, cleared ship for action, which they had hardly accomplished, when at 54 minutes past 3, the enemy commenced the attack, placing the Phœbe under the Essex's stern and the Cherub on her starboard bow.

The Phœbe's fire proved very destructive, as she occupied a position where, with her long guns, she could rake

the Essex, which vessel could scarcely bring a gun to bear on her, while the Cherub was pouring in a galling fire. The latter vessel, however, soon found her position such a hot one that she ran down to leeward, near the Phœbe, where both ships kept up a raking fire on the American frigate. Capt. Porter now got three long twelve pounders out of the stern ports which were worked with such skill and courage, that in half an hour both the enemy's vessels hauled off to repair damages, which is admitted in the British account of the battle.

During this first attack Capt. Porter had succeeded, through the exertions of the master, Mr. Barnwell, and the boatswain, Mr. Linscott, in getting springs on the cables three different times, but before the ship's broadside could be brought to bear on the enemy, they were cut away by the excessive fire of the British. The Essex had been frequently hulled, and several of her crew killed and wounded, but notwithstanding the unfavorable circumstances under which they were engaged in fighting against so superior a force, it was not possible for officers and men to conduct themselves in a more cool or gallant manner. All seemed determined to defend their ship to the last, and die rather than surrender ignominiously.

The enemy soon finished his repairs and the Phœbe and Cherub now took up a position on the Essex's starboard quarter, out of the reach of her carronades, and where her long guns could not be brought to bear upon them. The fire was very galling and Capt. Porter had no other alternative than to get under way and become the assailant. The top sail sheets and halliards having all been shot away, the flying jib was the only sail that could be hoisted. The flying jib was set, and the cable cut, and with the sails hanging from the yards the Essex ran down upon her assailants, and for a short time succeeded in closing with them (so as to use her carronades), and open a very destructive fire on the enemy. The Cherub was forced to haul off and for a few moments the hope was entertained that the enemy would be so far disabled as to enable the Essex to escape.

The Americans fought with desperation, fully justifying the high expectations their commander had formed of

them. The decks were now strewn with the dead, the ship had been several times on fire, the cock-pit was filled with the wounded, yet there was no talk of surrender. The Cherub did not again return to close action, but kept up a distant fire with her long guns, which both the British ships were enabled to do, their sails and masts not having been crippled. The Phœbe chose the distance best suited to her long 18s, where out of the range of the Essex's carronades, she kept up a deliberate fire, which told severely on the Americans, and this advantage she maintained to the end. Many of the Essex's guns were by this time disabled, and some of them had lost their entire crews. As the men fell at the guns, their places were supplied by others, and one gun in particular, was manned three times during the action, fifteen men having been slain, the captain of the gun alone escaping.

The action had now lasted nearly two hours, and finding it impossible to close with an adversary who chose his distance at pleasure, and the wind for the moment favoring the design, Capt. Porter determined to run his ship on shore, land his men and destroy her. For a few moments everything seemed to favor his wishes, and the Essex had got within musket shot of the beach, when the wind suddenly shifted off the land, and payed the ship's head down towards the Phœbe, which left her exposed again to a raking fire. Still as the Essex was now closing again with the enemy, it was hoped to get alongside the Phœbe, and carry her by boarding.

At this moment Lieut. Downes went on board, to receive orders, under the impression that the Essex would soon have to surrender. He could be of no use in the then wretched condition of the ship, and finding that the enemy were not going to give him a chance to board, Capt. Porter directed him to return to the Essex junior and be prepared to destroy her in case of necessity.

The slaughter on board the Essex was now terrible, the enemy raking her continually without her being able to bring a gun to bear; the Captain, therefore, directed a hawser to be bent to the sheet anchor, and the anchor to be cut from the bow, to bring the ship's head round. This succeeded, and the Essex's broadside was again brought to

bear and the enemy would, probably, have drifted out of gun shot, before he discovered she had anchored when the hawser unfortunately parted.

During the action, the American consul general, Mr. Poinsett, demanded of the governor, that the batteries of Valparaiso should protect the Essex, but he received only an evasive promise, that if the ship should reach the ordinary anchorage, he would *request* the English commander to cease the attack. He, however, declined resorting to force in any case, and did not seem at all concerned at the violation of the neutrality of the port. There was undoubtedly collusion between the British and the Chilian authorities from the first, and the Essex would have been attacked long before, but for the risk of injuring the shipping and the town. Mr. Poinsett was so fully satisfied of this, that he took the first occasion to demand his passports, and return to the United States.

The Essex had been on fire several times during the action, and at one moment alarmingly so, the flames bursting up each hatchway. The ship was now within three quarters of a mile of the shore, and it was hoped that many of the crew might save themselves should she blow up, as the fire was reported to be near the magazine; and the explosion of some powder below, served to increase the apprehension of the ship's destruction. The boats had all been destroyed by the enemy's shot, and Capt. Porter therefore considered himself justified in authorizing all those who could swim to try and gain the shore. Some reached the land, some were taken by the enemy, but the majority preferred remaining to share the fate of the ship they had so nobly defended. Those who remained gave their attention to the work of extinguishing the flames, and when they had succeeded went again to the few guns they could use, and recommenced firing on the British, who amidst all the horrors of the fire, had kept up an incessant cannonade from their long guns.

The sea was as smooth as glass, and the Essex lay like a target, riddled by every shot from the enemy. The crew were completely exhausted, and had become so weakened in numbers, that they entreated the Captain to surrender, in order to save the lives of the wounded. Capt. Porter

felt, himself, that further resistance was useless, and that it was impossible for his wreck of a vessel to succeed against the two ships, which were coolly boring her through and through, at every discharge of their long guns.

The Captain now summoned the officers of divisions for consultation, but could find but one remaining, Lieut. Stephen Decatur McKnight, who confirmed the report respecting the condition of affairs. Mr. Wilmer, the first lieutenant, after fighting most gallantly throughout the action, was knocked overboard by a splinter. Lieut. Cowell had lost a leg, Mr. Barnwell, the master, had been carried below, severely wounded, and Lieut. Odenheimer had been knocked overboard and did not regain the ship until after she had surrendered. The cockpit and steerage could contain no more of the wounded, who were killed in several instances while the surgeon was dressing their wounds. The ship, it was evident from the number of holes in her bottom, could not long be kept afloat. All the carpenter's crew were either killed or wounded, and the carpenter himself, in stopping some shot holes in the sides, had the slings shot away and came very near drowning. It was nothing but a useless waste of life to continue such an unequal struggle, and accordingly at twenty minutes past six the order was given to haul down the colors. This was the most painful order that Captain Porter gave in his life, although he had defended his ship with a heroism seldom equalled, and never surpassed. Seventy-five officers and men were all that remained capable of doing duty, some of whom afterwards died from wounds received.

The enemy still kept up their fire, after the colors were struck, and four men fell near the Captain, although an opposite gun was fired from the Essex, to indicate the surrender. Thinking that the English intended to show no quarter, Capt. Porter was about to again hoist the colors, when ten minutes after the surrender, the enemy ceased firing.

Thus ended this bloody encounter; bloody on one side only, for the English did not suffer materially in killed and wounded. The Essex lost fifty-eight killed, and sixty-six wounded, a total of one hundred and twenty-four, or

nearly one half of those who were on board at the commencement of the action. Of the thirty-one missing, the greater part were probably drowned in attempting to swim on shore, or were knocked overboard by splinters, so that out of two hundred and twenty-five, the loss was actually one hundred and fifty-five.

No one can fail to remark the great disparity of force in this engagement, for, except during the few moments when the Essex closed with the enemy, and could make use of her carronades, she fought the action with her six long twelve pounders, opposed to fifteen long eighteen pounders on board the Phœbe, and the long guns of the Cherub, and by the carronades of the two ships, while they lay on the Essex's quarter, where she could not bring a gun to bear. The English official report makes the Phœbe's loss four killed and seven wounded; that of the Cherub, one killed and three wounded, and there seems to be no reason to dispute the truth of this account, although it is strange that with such accurate firing as to put eighteen twelve pound shot into the Phœbe below the water line, the mortality on board that ship should have been so small.

The two English ships were much cut up aloft and in their hulls, and no doubt if the Essex could have encountered them under her three topsails, she would have beaten them off.

Although the engagement lasted nearly two hours and a half, Capt. Hillyar in his report evidently seeks to convey the impression that it was terminated much sooner; a statement which could have been contradicted, if necessary, by the thousands of spectators who witnessed the battle from the hills of Valparaiso. It is estimated that seven hundred eighteen pound shot were fired at the Essex, and that the latter fired her twelve long guns seventy-five times each.

After the lapse of sixty years, one can examine more dispassionately into this affair, than was possible at the time of its occurrence. It caused great excitement throughout the United States and called forth severe strictures against Capt. Hillyar's conduct in violating the neutrality of the port, after Porter's magnanimity in sparing the

Phœbe, when she was completely at his mercy. The British captain no doubt conformed strictly to orders from his government, to capture the Essex, whenever circumstances would permit (regardless of consequences), in order to stop the havoc which she was committing on British commerce.

Capt. Hillyar's situation must have been anything but a pleasant one, and less enviable, under the circumstances, than that of Porter; for it can never be a pleasant reflection to an officer, no matter what applause he may have gained from his government, to feel that he has violated the principles of honor and generosity, and disregarded the sacred rights of neutrality. For six weeks, Capt. Hillyar had been offered fair and honorable combat, on terms greatly to his advantage, and such as his government would no doubt have justified him in accepting; for we cannot conceive, that with all the prestige of Great Britain upon the ocean, she would desire one of her officers to decline an engagement with an inferior force.

Captain Hillyar's report to his government, detailing the capture of the Essex, is not creditable to him, inasmuch as he treats the capture of that vessel, after a brave defense, as a matter of small moment, and a foregone conclusion; whereas, had he felt that security of success, which he leaves us to infer, he should have taken advantage of the several opportunities that had been offered him, to add to the laurels previously gathered by the British navy.

Soon after the capture of the Essex, Captain Porter entered into an agreement with Captain Hillyar to disarm the Essex junior, and proceed with his surviving officers and crew to the United States, Captain Hillyar furnishing a passport to secure her from recapture. The ship was too small to properly accommodate so many people, but they were all willing to suffer any inconvenience, in order to reach their native land, where they might once more have it in their power to serve their country.

Whatever blame may be attached to Captain Hillyar's conduct before the capture of the Essex, his subsequent proceedings were marked by the greatest humanity toward the wounded, and he did all in his power to alleviate the distresses of war by a generous deportment towards his prisoners, indicating that a higher authority than his per-

sonal feelings had dictated what must have been the painful course of capturing a crippled ship in a neutral harbor.

In taking leave of Capt. Hillyar, Capt. Porter, after thanking him for his attentions, took occasion to remark that although he should lose no opportunity to do him full justice on the score of humanity, in the treatment of his prisoners, yet he should nevertheless be perfectly plain in making known Hillyar's conduct, in attacking the Essex in the manner he had done. The tears came into Hillyar's eyes, and grasping Porter's hand, he exclaimed, "My dear Porter, you know not the responsibility that hung over me with respect to your ship; perhaps my life depended on my taking her." No explanations were asked, and none were given, and Captain Hillyar has long since gone to his grave leaving to his descendants, or to his government the duty of doing him justice in this matter. It was, however, asserted at the time, and we have no reason to doubt the truth of the report, that an admiralty order was issued to officers in the South seas, not to respect the neutrality of any port where the Essex should be found; and it is not unlikely, that Captain Hillyar may have anticipated the fate of Byng, if he had allowed the Essex to escape from Valparaiso.

The capture of the Essex cost the British government great anxiety and expense, and was only effected after she had entirely destroyed their whale fishery in the Pacific. The fact of their sending so superior a force in pursuit of her, with orders to leave nothing to chance, shows the importance they attached to her capture.

Captain Porter sailed from Valparaiso, in the Essex junior, on the 27th of April, 1814, and made every effort to reach home in time to fit out ships to intercept the Phœbe and her prize in the British channel; and favored by the winds, of which they took every advantage, they arrived off Sandy Hook on the 5th of July, where they fell in with H. B. M. ship Saturn, Captain Nash. This officer, at first treated Captain Porter with great civility, furnished him with late newspapers and sent him a present of fruit. The boarding officer, after examining the papers of the Essex junior, suffered her to proceed and she stood along

on the same tack with the British ship, but in about two hours she was again hove to by the Saturn. An officer now came on board and reëxamined the papers, and with the boat's crew overhauled the ship's hold. The cause of this strange proceeding was unknown, and when Capt. Porter expressed his astonishment, he was informed that Captain Nash had his motives, and doubted whether Captain Hillyar had authority to make such an arrangement as he had entered into with Captain Porter, and that the Essex junior must be detained for a short time. Captain Porter protested against any detention, and informed the boarding officer that he should no longer consider himself on parole; he then offered the British officer his sword, with the remark that he delivered it with the same feelings with which he had surrendered it to Captain Hillyar. The boarding officer declined to receive the sword, but after visiting the Saturn returned with an order from Captain Nash, that the Essex junior should remain all night under the lee of the British ship. Whereupon Capt. Porter exclaimed, "Tell the captain that I am his prisoner, and do not consider myself any longer bound by my contract with Captain Hillyar, which he has violated, and I shall act accordingly."

At 7 next morning the wind being quite light and the Essex junior still detained under the guns of the Saturn, Captain Porter feeling very uncertain as to the intentions of the British commander, ordered a boat to be lowered and manned, and left the ship leaving a message for Capt. Nash, that he considered most British officers regardless of each other's honor, that he had escaped, was armed and prepared to defend himself and if met it must be as an enemy. Captain Porter had got nearly a gun shot from the Saturn, before his departure was noticed; at that instant a fresh breeze springing up, the British ship made sail after the boat but fortunately a thick fog set in, and the pursuer was baffled. After sailing and rowing about sixty miles, Porter landed near the town of Babylon, Long Island, where his account of himself was at first discredited, and he was obliged to produce his commission, to convince the inhabitants that he was not a British officer. When their doubts were removed he was treated with all hospitality.

Fig. 14.

The Essex junior was detained the whole of the day following Captain Porter's escape, and searched, it was said, for the purpose of finding money. Her crew was mustered under plea of looking for deserters, her officers insulted, and finally, after inflicting all the annoyance possible, Capt. Nash permitted the vessel to proceed to New York, where she was condemned and sold for the benefit of the captors.

The English spread the report through their newspapers, that Capt. Porter's escape was a breach of parole, and it was asserted that Admiral Cochrane had mustered the officers of his fleet on the quarter deck, and declared that Porter was out of the pale of honor and must be treated accordingly; but the correspondence between the agents of the two governments shows that Capt. Porter was, by the admiral's own admission, discharged from his parole, and as free to serve his country as if he had never been made prisoner. The following copy of the passport, or safe conduct, given by Captain Hillyar to Porter, shows that the contract on the part of the British was virtually broken.

By James Hillyar, Esq., Captain of his majesty's ship Phœbe, and senior officer of his majesty's ships in Valparaiso Bay.

I hereby certify, that I have on the part of his Britannic majesty, entered into an agreement with Captain David Porter, of the United States navy, and late commander of the frigate Essex, who on the part of his government engages as follows, to wit:

That himself, his officers and crew, will proceed to the United States in the ship called the Essex junior, as a cartel commanded by Lieut. John Downes, of the United States navy, and having a crew consisting of the officers and men named in the annexed list.

That the said Captain Porter, his officers and crew, a list of which is subjoined, will remain on board on parole, not to take arms against Great Britain until regularly exchanged: and that he pledges his honor to fulfil the foregoing conditions.

I therefore request, that the said ship, the Essex junior, may be permitted to pass freely to the United States, without any impediment; and that the officers commanding his majesty's ships of war, as well as private armed vessels, and all others in authority under the British government, as also those in alliance with his said majesty, will give the said David Porter, his officers and crew, and the crew of the aforesaid ship, called the Essex junior, every aid

and assistance to enable them to arrive at the place of their destination.

And as it may become necessary for the Essex junior to touch at one or more places, for the purpose of obtaining refreshments and supplies, it is requested that in such case, all to whom this passport may be presented, will give the persons on board said ship every facility in supplying their wants, and permit them to depart with her without hinderance.

Given under my hand, on board his majesty's ship Phœbe, at Valparaiso, April 1814.

JAMES HILLYAR.

The following letter, from the Honorable William Jones to Captain Porter, is inserted to show the sentiments of the navy department in regard to the detention of the Essex junior by Capt. Nash of the British navy, showing that whatever action was taken with regard to dissolving Capt. Porter's parole was authorized by the United States government:

Navy Department, July 13, 1814.

Sir: I have before me your letter of the 9th, which has been exhibited to the president and received his attention. The conduct of the commander of the Saturn has excited in his breast, as it must in every liberal and correct mind, the most indignant feelings.

The history and presence of the brave remnant of the crew of the Essex, was alone calculated to inspire a generous sympathy, and courteous demeanor, though the highest safeguard known to civilized warfare had not guarantied their exemption from molestation; and it is difficult to reconcile the absence of those feelings with the character Captain Nash doubtless aspires to.

The circumstances of your escape from the Essex junior, while under detention, would, it is believed, sustain yourself and your government in dissolving your parole; but as the Essex junior was suffered to proceed under the original passport, though indecently detained, and rudely treated, the scrupulously exact and liberal conduct of the government of the United States, in despite of the injustice and illiberality which it has received from the hands of the enemy, may possibly induce the president to waive the right which the violation in this case would enable him to assert. The matter however is still under consideration and will be decided upon in due time.

Your officers will, for the present, and until further order can be taken, remain attached to the Essex junior. Your crew will be immediately paid off, upon a requisition being made upon the agent at

New York for the amount of the balances due them, which shall be remitted to him without delay. I have this day accepted Purser Shaw's bills for $29,000 approved by yourself.

You will proceed to join your friends at your pleasure; and after having consoled them for your long absence, we shall be gratified with your presence here.

The court of inquiry will be ordered to be held either in Philadelphia or New York, as may best suit your convenience. I confirm the purchase of the Essex junior for the navy of the United States at the sum of $25,000.

You will please to transmit to this department the valuation made by the persons appointed by you for that purpose.

I am very respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

Captain David Porter, U. S. Navy, New York. W. JONES.

There is scarcely a circumstance connected with the conduct of the British, from the moment of the attack on the Essex to the time the Essex junior was arrested in her voyage, which does not deserve severe condemnation. It marks the difference between the manner in which the little navy of the United States carried on the war, compared with England and her thousand ships, and it is another evidence of the destruction our navy was dealing to British commerce, and the humiliation to British pride that the government should become so regardless of the rights of neutrals, as to direct the capture of certain vessels under any and all circumstances. All authorities on international law concur in the opinion, that it is strictly forbidden, as well by the universal law as by the laws and treaties of all nations, to commence or continue any act of violence against any ship whatever, within the limits of the maritime jurisdiction of a friendly and neutral state.

On the faith of this law of nations, which is familiar to every naval officer, a ship of war should be able to enter the port of any neutral with full confidence that he would be secure against any force of his enemies, and it was this confidence that Great Britain would respect the universal law, which led Captain Porter to anchor his crippled ship, not supposing that she would be attacked within pistol shot of the shore. Had he supposed that this would be done, not only in violation of neutrality but also of the

plighted faith of a British officer, Capt. Porter would have landed his men and blown up his ship, and thus deprived his enemy of a trophy which added nothing to his renown, and saved the lives of his brave officers and men, who, reposing too much faith in the honor of their foes, fell victims to their own confidence.

The action of the Chilian government, in denying to the Essex that protection which a neutral is bound to grant under such circumstances, was due to the fact that there had lately been a change in the administration, by which the particular friends of the United States had been deprived of power, and thrown into prison. It became, therefore, the great object of the faction in power, to conciliate the English by evincing hostility to the Americans. Had the Chilians possessed the sensibility which once influenced their Spanish ancestors, they would have insisted on the restoration of the Essex, with all the brave survivors of that glorious defeat.

The reader, who has taken any interest in the transactions related in these memoirs, will naturally desire to know the fate of Lieut. Gamble of the marines, and his companions, who were left at Nookaheevah, in charge of the prize ships New Zealander, Sir Andrew Hammond, Greenwich and Seringapatam on the 13th of December, 1813. Lieut. Gamble had received instructions, that if he did not hear of the Essex for five and a half months, he was to repair with the three ships to Valparaiso. Under his orders were left three officers and twenty-six men, six of the latter being prisoners of war. Lieut. Gamble soon found that his situation was a very unpleasant one, and that it was much easier to control a large body of men, on board a man-of-war, than a few individuals relieved, in a great measure, from the constraint of discipline, and with very little to occupy their time.

The Essex was hardly clear of the islands, before the natives began to prove troublesome. The Englishman who was found on the island when the Essex arrived, commenced inciting the natives to commit depredations upon the live stock which Captain Porter had left behind, in consequence of which Mr. Gamble placed the ships in a

state of defense and landed six guns which were placed on Fort Madison completely commanding the bay.

On sending a message to the tribes of the adjacent valley warning them not to kill any more swine, they sent back word that they were aware how few men he had, that Opotee was not coming back, and that they would do as they pleased. Thereupon, Lieut. Gamble warned the old chief Gattanewa, that unless the stolen swine was restored, he would proceed through the valley with an armed force and destroy everything the natives had. The old chief sincerely regretted the bad conduct of his people, and tried to make them do better, but his remonstrances were unheeded; and the natives, emboldened by the apparent weakness of the party, ventured into the encampment to commit their thefts. Lieut. Gamble, finding that there was no alternative, conducted an expedition against the natives, which soon brought them to terms; but during his stay he had several times to repeat the operation, to make the savages listen to reason.

At length the New Zealander was fitted for sea, and dispatched to the United States, but was unfortunately recaptured by a British cruiser, within one day's sail of New York.

After the sailing of the New Zealander, the remaining men became exceedingly insubordinate, and were constantly leaving their posts in defiance of orders, and Lieut. Gamble was therefore obliged to inflict severe punishment on them in his attempt to maintain discipline. In order to try and keep the natives in ignorance of the strength of his force, Lieut. Gamble gave orders to the crews of his three vessels, not to permit a single native to come alongside; but one morning he was informed that a female was seen to swim from one of the ships to the shore, carrying with her a bundle of bread. Now Gamble was not a romantic man, and he looked upon these sea nymphs as so many sharks engaged in public plunder, and he determined by summary measures to put a stop to these illicit proceedings. Next night Midshipmen Clapp and Feltus were sent quietly on board the Seringapatam, and unexpectedly entering the cabin, three of the sea nymphs jumped out of the cabin windows carrying with them a large bundle of bread

for transportation to the shore. After securing the fair plunderers, the Sir Andrew Hammond was boarded, and though no natives were found it was evident they had recently been there. The boat now returned to the Greenwich with the fair prisoners (all women are supposed to be fair), when the unromantic lieutenant, forgetful of the respect due to the sex, gave them a *spanking*, as he considered it necessary for the lives of all his party that his weakness should not become too well known to the savages.

The Sir Andrew Hammond was now sent to the adjacent islands to procure provisions, the natives of Nookaheevah professing to be unable to keep up their contributions. The cruise was successful, and for a time the supply was ample.

The sojourn among the islanders had greatly demoralized the seamen, who were generally of the lowest class, and some of them being Englishmen who had deserted their own flag, they were ready to desert the one under which they now served, on the first opportunity. Several desertions took place, and when the culprits were captured they were punished, and a mutinous spirit began to be manifest among the sailors.

At 2 o'clock A. M., of the 18th of April, three men who had been punished for misconduct deserted in one of the Greenwich's boats, carrying with them three muskets, a supply of ammunition and all the provisions, clothing, &c., that they could lay hands on, and to delay pursuit they scuttled the ship's other boat.

On the 3d of May, Lieut. Gamble found that a boat's sail had been stolen from the Greenwich, and suspected one Belcher, a boatswain's mate of bad reputation, of the theft. Next day he was informed that most of the men were plotting either to mutiny, or to make their escape in one of the ships, and that they were instigated by Belcher and four of the prisoners. Mr. Gamble thought it prudent to make light of the report, but took every precaution against the success of the plan, and removed all the arms and ammunition on board his own ship. It was now evident, from the manner of the sailors, that a storm was brewing, and that Lieut. Gamble's position was becoming

critical. He knew that Belcher was a villain, and at the head of the disturbance, yet in the absence of any very insubordinate act he could do nothing, for if he had attempted to confine those whom he had grounds to suspect, the others would refuse to obey him. Such is the force of the bad example of one man, who will often corrupt a whole ship's company, who without his presence would have given little trouble.

On the 7th of May, the mutiny broke out. Lieut. Gamble went on board the Seringaptam for the purpose of having the tanks properly stowed, and upon reprimanding one of the men for his careless manner of working, the villain called out that he would not obey the order nor do any more work on board the vessel. The words had no sooner escaped his lips than all the men on deck threw down their hats and refused to do duty. One of the men drew a knife, and told his accomplices to seize Lieut. Gamble, who made an attempt to get into a boat, but was prevented by the mutineers, who threw him violently to the deck, bound him hand and foot, and thrust him into the vessel's run, where he was soon joined by Midshipmen Clapp and Feltus, who were treated in the same brutal manner. The scuttle was then nailed down and a sentry placed over it.

Sailors, under wholesome discipline, are the most orderly and well behaved people in the world, capable of performing acts of courage that would do honor to any one; but, when discipline is relaxed, they are apt to be mutinous, in which condition they will stop at nothing to carry out their ends. So it was in this case, the men having mutinied they threw off all restraint, and notwithstanding the many acts of kindness they had received from Lieut. Gamble, they treated him in the most inhuman manner. It was the mutiny of the Bounty over again.

When Mr. Gamble attempted to expostulate, one of the ruffians named Stanley, raised a maul and threatened to dash his brains out if he spoke another word; but the lieutenant persisted, and demanded what they were going to do; to which they answered, that having been kept prisoners long enough in the damned place they were determined to regain their liberty; they then gave three

cheers and hoisted the British flag. They afterwards went on shore and spiked the guns in the fort, bringing all the arms and ammunition on board.

They sent for White, who had been expelled from the Essex by Captain Porter, for his attempt to excite a mutiny on board that ship, and then bending some of the sails, they unmoored the ship and stood out to sea. Mr. Gamble and his companions suffered much in their horrid place of confinement, for want of air, and after urgent requests the two midshipmen were allowed to come into the cabin, and *they* finally persuaded the mutineers to let the lieutenant come there also; where, seated on a chest, two men kept guard over him with his own pistols. The mutineers amounted to thirteen in number, including six prisoners of war, but it was a great satisfaction to know that they were all Englishmen, who had deserted their own flag to enlist under the stars and stripes.

In the evening, the ship was out of the bay, and Lieut. Gamble was to undergo further sufferings and mortifications. One of his guards (either by accident or design), fired a pistol, and the ball struck the lieutenant's left heel and the report was no sooner heard, than several muskets were pointed at the prisoner through the hatch, and would have been discharged but for the remonstrances of his guard. At 9 P. M., the maintopsail was backed, and the three officers were informed that a boat was in readiness to receive them. Lieut. Gamble expostulated with the men on their barbarity in turning them adrift without arms to defend themselves against the natives, whereupon they gave him two muskets and some cartridges. On passing to the boat, which Midshipmen Feltus and Clapp and William Worth and Richard Sansbury had already entered, Mr. Gamble found all the mutineers armed to the teeth, showing that, although under proper discipline seamen are brave to a fault, as mutineers they are both cowardly and cruel. Man differs from the beast through the force of good example, and under the influence of good laws. Left to his own discretion, he has only the instincts of the animal.

The unfortunate officers and men in the boat, were turned adrift some miles from the entrance to the bay.

Lieut. Gamble, suffering intense pain from his wound, steered the boat, while his four companions alternately bailed and pulled. They at length reached the Greenwich, and were informed that the Englishman Wilson was at the bottom of the mutiny, and that he had informed the natives that they could do as they pleased with the Americans who were now perfectly helpless.

The natives now commenced to be very troublesome, and Mr. Gamble, learning that Wilson was close at hand, Midshipman Feltus and a trader named Burdenelle volunteered to go on shore and capture him; to which Mr. Gamble very reluctantly consented, for he had for some time been convinced, that the natives were only watching an opportunity to commit some act of treachery. Feltus and Burdenelle started on their mission, well armed, but Wilson fled into the interior. About 12 o'clock, as Lieut. Gamble was anxiously watching the shore from the deck of the Greenwich, he discovered the boat in the surf, surrounded by natives, while others were robbing the encampment of all they could lay their hands on. The guns of the Hammond were fired at them, when at the same instant two white men were seen swimming towards the ship, and throwing up their arms in token of distress. Mr. Clapp with two men hastened in a boat to their rescue.

Lieut. Gamble now remained alone on board the Greenwich, while two boats, full of savages, were approaching with evident hostile intent. Notwithstanding the excruciating pain from his wound he managed to hobble from gun to gun (which were loaded with grapeshot), and to fire them so effectively, as not only to drive back the savages in the boats, but also to clear the beach, enabling Mr. Clapp to save the lives of the two men who were struggling in the water. These proved to be Worth and Coddington, the latter badly wounded and nearly exhausted from loss of blood. They reported what had been anticipated by Mr. Gamble, that Midshipman Feltus, Burdenelle, Thomas Gibbs, and John Thomas had been murdered by the natives, and that a trader named Ross must inevitably share the same fate.

Being now reduced to the necessity of leaving the island as soon as possible, Lieut. Gamble commenced fitting the

Sir Andrew Hammond for sea, in the meantime keeping up a fire on the natives on shore. Some of the shots were directed at the fort, where a number of natives were assembled, under Wilson, who was endeavoring to draw the spikes from the guns there mounted.

At sunset, May 9, the Greenwich was set on fire by Lieut. Gamble's orders, and that night, the cables of the Sir Andrew Hammond being cut, she stood out of the bay, lighted on her way by the flames of the burning vessel. Lieut. Gamble now found himself at sea in a leaky ship, without boats or anchors, and with a short allowance of provisions. There was but one seaman on board, but he, with the assistance of the other men, finally got a sufficient number of sails bent, with which to manage the ship. Finding it impossible to reach the continent, in the condition in which he then was, Lieut. Gamble steered for the Sandwich islands, in the hope of there obtaining a crew sufficient to reach Valparaiso, for his present force only included himself, badly wounded; Midshipman Clapp, in good health; B. Bispham (marine), in good health; P. Coddington (marine), wounded in the head; Wm. Worth (seaman), leg fractured; R. Sansbury (ordinary seaman), down with rheumatism; J. Burnham (ordinary seaman), an old man just cured of scurvy; J. Pittenger (marine), a cripple; so that only two persons on board were fit for duty, and only one acquainted with the management of a ship. After many hardships and narrow escapes from shipwreck, the ship arrived off the S. W. end of the island of Wahoo on the 31st of May, 1814. When an American, named Harbottle, came off and offered to pilot them in; and with the aid of Capt. Winship, a generous American, he procured a crew of natives who worked the ship safely through the reefs into the port, where Capt. Winship had an anchor ready for them.

While here a ship came off the island, and looked into the harbor. Lieut. Gamble was satisfied that this was the vessel which the mutineers had run off with, but he never heard of them more.

Lieut. Gamble received every attention from Capt. Winship and others, and left on the 11th of June, 1814, supplied with everything he could reasonably expect, bound

to Honolulu, a number of the natives taking passage with him, bearing presents for King Kamahama, but the second day out the ship was captured by H. B. M. sloop Cherub, Captain Tucker, one of the vessels that had captured the Essex. Nothwithstanding the troubles that Lieut. Gamble had experienced, his greatest sorrow was on being informed of the loss of the Essex, although it was some alleviation to his feelings when Capt. Tucker confessed that he never saw a ship make so desperate a defense, and that he "had expected to see her colors lowered an hour before Free Trade and Sailors' Rights came down."

Lieut. Gamble and his companions were not particularly well treated on board the Cherub, where they remained nine months, until the ship arrived in Rio de Janeiro, where, upon receiving news of peace being declared, they were set at liberty, and a little over a year after his capture, Lieut. Gamble was restored to his family and friends, on the 27th of August, 1815.

This gallant officer died on the 11th of September, 1836, having attained the rank of major, and brevet lieutenant colonel in the marine corps, respected by all who knew him.

Mr. Gamble's account of his adventures is extremely interesting, but we could do no more than give a brief outline of his narrative.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHEN the Babylonians were satisfied of Porter's true character, they hauled his boat from the water, and placing it on wheels, he was conducted by a number of the towns people to the city of New York. Here he was again the recipient of a popular demonstration. On his entry into the city in a carriage, the horses were removed from

the traces, and the people hauled the vehicle to the hotel, amid the shouts of the whole city. Capt. Porter remained but a short time in New York to receive the plaudits of his countrymen, but proceeded towards his home in Pennsylvania, meeting on his way continued tokens of the estimation in which his services were held by the community. He entered Philadelphia in a carriage, accompanied by the mayor, and escorted by an immense cavalcade of citizens of all ranks, and passed through streets gaily decorated with flags, in his honor. When the procession arrived opposite Christ's church, on Second street, it was met by a large body of respectable seamen, who attached a rope to the carriage (from which the people had removed the horses), and proceeded through the city with enthusiastic shouts. On arriving at the Mansion House hotel the sailors insisted on carrying the Captain in, on their shoulders, and these demonstrations continued until he reached Chester, where his family was residing.

Had Porter returned a conqueror, he could not have received more honor, and this was gratifying to him, as it was an evidence that he had performed his duty to the satisfaction of his countrymen.

After a short visit to his family, Capt. Porter reported in person to the secretary of the navy, in Washington. Mr. Jones received him with great kindness, and accompanied him to see the president, who invited the Captain to dinner, and listened with great interest to his account of events in the Pacific.

Captain Porter was immediately offered the command of the Columbia, 44, then building at Washington, the name of which vessel was subsequently changed to Essex.

The Captain had several ideas which he desired to put into execution, one was the building and equipping of a number of small, fast vessels, to be under his command, and with which he would burn, sink and destroy all the British merchant vessels he could come across. The government approved of this plan, and immediately ordered to be purchased or built, and equipped at the Washington navy yard, five vessels called the Firefly, Torch, Spitfire, Eagle and Lynx. These were to have

been very fast sailers, and would no doubt have performed good service had they ever been finished.

In the meantime, Captain Porter was ordered to command the steamer Fulton, constructed by the distinguished man whose name she bore. This vessel was intended to carry 32 pounder carronades, and two 100 pound Columbiads to fire hot shot. She was 145 feet long, 55 feet beam, and was to draw ten feet of water with all her guns, machinery, stores and crew. Her machinery was protected against shot, and the vessel would, no doubt, have proved a powerful auxiliary to the navy, had she been put in commission during the war, for at her trial trip on the 2d of June, 1815, according to the chronicles of the times, "she exceeded the most sanguine expectations, having *stemmed the current* in North river with the greatest ease!"

Events were now thickening, and the enemy were making demonstrations towards Washington. Rear Admiral Cockburn had assembled a large fleet at the mouth of the Potomac, and another fleet, consisting of several ships of war, and some thirty transports, appeared off Annapolis. The government had collected a force of about eleven thousand men to resist the landing of the enemy, and Commodore Rodgers, Captain Perry and Captain Porter were called upon to assist in defending the capital.

Captain Porter on receiving this order issued the following animating summons to his old crew:

Free Trade and Sailor's Rights.

To the crew of the old Essex: Sailors, the enemy is about attempting the destruction of your new ship at Washington, and I am ordered there to defend her. I shall proceed immediately, and all disposed to accompany me will meet me at three o'clock this afternoon, at the navy agent's office.

New York, Aug. 22, 1814.

The enemy had entered the Potomac, and on the 19th of August had landed an army, with the intention of marching on Washington. On the 22d the army had without opposition reached upper Marlborough, Md., only about 20 miles from the capital. At Pig's point, on the Patuxent river, a short distance from this place, Admiral Cockburn engaged Commodore Barney's flotilla, which was obliged

to retire before superior numbers. On the 24th the army of General Ross reached Bladensburg, having met with very little opposition during their march.

We have no space to spare for a recital of the humiliating events on the field of Bladensburg. Almost the only redeeming feature, on the American side, was the desperate struggle of the seamen and marines, under the heroic Barney, to maintain the honor of the nation, for the commanding general ordered a retreat almost at the first sight of the British uniform.

With the fall of Commodore Barney, and the dispersion of his men, the road to Washington was unobstructed, and the British reached the city at 8 o'clock that evening, where they lost no time in destroying the public buildings, including the Capitol, Treasury, War Office, navy yard, President's House, bridge across the Potomac, &c., &c. Among the property destroyed at the navy yard was the new Essex, and a sloop of war nearly completed.

The enemy's fleet had anchored off Alexandria, Va., the citizens of which, to save their property, had made a shameful capitulation, and the object of the British general having been attained, and many rapacious and barbarous acts committed by his soldiers, he made his arrangements to get back to the ships, before troops could be assembled to cut off his retreat.

In the meantime, Captain Porter being busy in collecting his men, was not able to reach Washington until the British were evacuating the city. His plan was now to prevent the return of their ships down the river, or to inflict upon them all the damage possible, and he was accordingly instructed by the secretary of the navy to erect batteries along the Potomac, and annoy the enemy in their retreat. At the time of Porter's arrival in Washington, the British had loaded fourteen American vessels, at Alexandria, with a large amount of flour, tobacco, cotton, sugar, coffee and many other articles which an honorable enemy would not have embarked. Captain Porter, accompanied by Captain Creighton of the navy, mounted horses and dressed in citizens' clothes rode to Alexandria to reconnoitre. They found at the dock, some English boats in charge of a midshipman, and were so disgusted at the pro-

ceedings that they made a dash into the party. Capt. Creighton seized the young Englishman by the cravat, and endeavored to haul him on to his horse to carry him off, but the cravat gave way and the midshipman fell to the ground, while the two officers rode away, leaving the citizens of Alexandria in great consternation for fear the English would retaliate. The signal of alarm was given and all the English in the neighborhood flew to arms, expecting an attack, and could hardly be convinced that only two persons would dare to do such a desperate thing.

Captain Porter selected a place called the White House, on the west bank of the Potomac, about 30 miles below the capital, as the site of his battery to prevent the return of the enemy's vessels down the river. Capt. Creighton, Lieut. Clack and several other officers of the navy volunteered their services, as also Mr. Augustus Monroe, Mr. Ferdinand Fairfax, and other citizens and officers of the militia. On the 1st of September, Porter arrived at the White House, accompanied by the remnant of the Essex's crew, and prepared the ground to mount three long eighteen and two long twelve pounders which were on their way down. Generals Hungerford and Young had received orders to coöperate with him, and to make such a disposition of their forces as would enable him to mount his cannon, without obstruction, by protecting him in the rear in case the enemy attempted to land. Positions were also allotted to the military, when the enemy's ships should attempt to pass down, as it was believed that concealed by the thick woods on the high bank, they would be enabled to clear the enemy's decks with their musketry, and divert their fire from the batteries.

Capt. Porter had no sooner reached the ground selected for the battery, than an 18 gun brig was seen coming up the river, General Hungerford and his men were stationed in the woods, and a couple of small four pounders arriving at that instant, the Captain planted them on the edge of the bank and opened fire on the British vessel. Having a fine breeze, the brig was enabled to get by, but only fired one broadside as she passed the line of field pieces and musketry. The militia followed the brig up the bank, and greatly annoyed the enemy by their fire. In this affair

but one American was wounded, the sailors and soldiers behaved well, and if any mistakes or confusion occurred it was from an excess of zeal and desire to injure the British.

That same evening two eighteen pounders arrived, and next morning a British bomb vessel and two barges (one carrying a long thirty-two pounder the other a mortar), commenced operations against the American position, the first throwing shells in front out of the reach of shot, the others flanking the battery on the right. The firing lasted all day without intermission, and though shells fell near and burst over the battery, they had no other effect than to accustom the militia to the danger.

In the afternoon, Capt. Porter removed one of the eighteen pounders to a more advanced position, about a mile distant, and commenced a fire on the bomb vessel, which became so effective as to draw on him the fire of all the enemy's vessels, including an 18 gun brig and a schooner which had now dropped down the river.

On the 3d of September, the enemy were reinforced by another bomb vessel and a sloop of war fitted as a rocket ship. The latter anchoring near the battery such a fire was opened on her that she was forced to change her position. All this day and the succeeding night, the enemy kept up a brisk fire of shot, shell and rockets without affecting the Americans in the least; and the work of increasing and improving the batteries continued.

Five light field pieces were added on the 3d, and the Captain had every hope of receiving two long thirty-two pounders from Washington. He built a furnace for heating shot, and time alone was required to make his position a very formidable one. On the 4th and 5th, the enemy kept up an incessant fire day and night, and one night attempted to land and spike the guns, but were driven off. A twelve pounder and two sixes were now moved to an advanced position, where they could reach the rocket ship, which vessel was much cut up, while the whole British force opened fire on the new position without driving the sailors from their guns. They fought till their ammunition was exhausted, and then coolly retired (with their pieces) amid a shower of shot from the enemy.

Firing now ceased, as if by mutual consent, and some 32 pounders arriving, the Americans made great exertions to get them mounted, but carriages could not be furnished, much to their regret, as in the evening two frigates anchored above, making the entire force of the enemy, two frigates each of 48 guns, three bomb ships each of 10 guns, one sloop of war 26 guns, one brig 18 guns, one schooner one gun, and two barges each carrying one gun, a total of one hundred and seventy-three guns. The guns mounted in the battery, were three 18 pounders, two 12 pounders, six 9 pounders and two 4 pounders.

On the morning of the 6th, the enemy showing a disposition to move, Captain Porter advised General Hungerford of their intentions and prepared to meet them. At Meridian, the frigates stood down for the battery with a fair wind and tide, the other vessels, together with the prizes loaded with plunder from Alexandria, following in succession. As the enemy approached, a well directed fire of hot and cold shot from the batteries was directed against them, while the ships poured in their broadsides, which our men endured with great firmness. The militia failed to open fire (as had been expected) on the ships to clear their decks, and the result was that the whole fire of the enemy was concentrated on the battery, the two frigates coming to anchor while the other vessels passed by. The Americans in the battery now retired behind an adjacent hill, in readiness to charge the enemy in case he should attempt to land, but the latter contented himself by keeping up a tremendous fire with guns, bombs and rockets, owing to which General Hungerford found it impossible to change his position, without losing a large number of his men.

The English effected their object in passing down the river, but had there been sufficient time to have got the heavy guns into position, they would no doubt have met with serious disaster. As it was, they were much cut up, while the Americans' loss did not exceed eleven killed and nineteen wounded.

In his official report of these transactions, Captain Porter spoke in high terms of the gallant conduct of the United States and Virginia artillery. Had they possessed as good artillery in 1814, as they did at the same place in 1862, on

an occasion which the writer well remembers, the British would have had a much hotter time in getting down the river.

The remnant of the Essex's crew had received, before this, a baptism of fire to which all others would seem feeble, and they stood to their guns like veterans as they were. Lieut. Barnewell received on this occasion his third wound, and Dr. Hoffman, surgeon of the Essex, was shot in the head. The detachment of marines, under Capt. Grayson, forming part of the naval force that had so much distinguished itself under Commodore Barney at Bladensburg, were anxious to do their part on this occasion to wipe out the odium of that defeat, and two of them were killed in their courageous but unsuccessful endeavor to stop the progress of the enemy.

After the other vessels had passed the battery, the two frigates got under way and proceeded down to Indian Head where Captain Perry, of the navy, had a battery of light guns and an eighteen pounder, but he could make no impression on them, and after pouring their broadsides into him until after sunset, they proceeded on their way with their plunder.

It seems strange to us at this day, who have had hundreds of thousands of soldiers on the Potomac at one time, that a handful of British soldiers and a few British ships should ascend the river and burn the Capitol. Yet such was the case, and the operation may be repeated if more attention is not paid to the urgent appeals of those who will have to fight the battles of the country, when war does come upon us. We are, comparatively, not better prepared for war than we were in 1814. The forts that we have built since then, would make less impression on the iron clads of to-day, than did the 18 pounders of Porter at the White House, on the marauding squadron of sixty years ago.

The marks of the British invasion have long since been eradicted, a magnificent Capitol has arisen from the ashes of the old, and all that suffered from the ruthless hands of the enemy has given place to something more grand and beautiful. One little marble monument alone bears witness to the work of the destroyer. This was made in Rome,

from a design by Captain Porter, and was erected, under his supervision, in the Washington navy yard, to the memory of those gallant officers, Caldwell, Somers, Decatur, Israel, and Wadsworth, who fell at Tripoli. Later, the Captain had inscribed upon this cenotaph "Mutilated by Britons 1814."

It seems almost incredible to us, that a military force belonging to the most enlightened and professedly philanthropic nation in the world, commanded by distinguished officers, and without any extraordinary motive for vengeance, should have emulated the exploits of savages, and carried fire and sword into the capital city of their enemy, involving public buildings, monuments of art and literature, government records, and private property, in common ruin. It is a satisfaction to know, that when the vandals fled from the scene of their barbarism, our gallant tars gave them a parting salute to remind them of their trip to Washington.

The particular misfortune to Captain Porter in all this business, was the destruction of the new Essex, which was rapidly approaching completion, when burned by the enemy at the Washington navy yard, and as there was no ship that he could command at the moment, he was forced to wait patiently for employment.

We have before alluded to Captain Porter's plan for fitting out a flying squadron, to cruise in the British channel for the destruction of the enemy's commerce. His scheme was warmly approved by the government, and he was now busily engaged in getting the five vessels designed for this service ready for sea, and in collecting around him the choice spirits who were to sail under his command, including many of the old officers and men of the Essex. Fortunately peace intervened, and the project of illuminating the British channel was not carried out; for whatever inhumanities Great Britain may have perpetrated towards us, it is just as well that we had no opportunity to indulge in acts of retaliation. Such a system was one that we should have pursued only, when at our last gasp, and was unnecessary when we were almost everywhere victorious on land and sea.

Perry also was to have had command of a flying squadron,

designed for a similar service, and it may be imagined how well these energetic men would have performed their duties, and helped to convince the British of the necessity of peace. These vessels were ultimately devoted to the more beneficent purpose of teaching the dey of Algiers to respect the rights of American commerce.

Immediately after peace was declared with Great Britain, the United States government fitted out two squadrons, one under Decatur, and the other under Bainbridge, who had supreme command of the entire force. The five vessels, late of Porter's squadron, were under Decatur's command, and were present when he taught the despot of Algiers to respect the rights of civilization, by a treaty which guarantied our exemption from any further tribute to barbarians.

Although our navy had succeeded so well in the war of 1812, it was evident at the close, that a more thorough organization was required; and, after wasting much discussion on a very plain subject, congress, on the 7th of February, 1815, established a board of naval commissioners, whose duty it was, under the superintendence of the secretary of the navy, to look after all supplies for the navy, the construction, armament, and equipment of ships, management of navy yards, and in fact everything pertaining to naval affairs. Of this important board, Commodore John Rodgers was appointed president, Captains Hull and Porter members, and James K. Paulding of New York (afterwards secretary of the navy), was appointed secretary of the board. When we look back to the system by which our naval affairs were administered, previous to the organization of this board, we can only ascribe our success, upon the ocean, to the talents of our commanding officers; and it is certain, that the service has never since embraced an equal number of men who possessed, in so eminent a degree, the qualifications of naval heroes.

The board was no sooner established, than discussion was rife as to its powers, and the papers of the day were full of speculations as to whether the commissioners were instruments in the hands of the head of the department, without power except such as he might choose to delegate to them; or, whether their functions were ministerial, leav-

ing to the secretary of the navy the duties of political and financial head of affairs. It could not, certainly, have been the intention of congress to select three of the most conspicuous officers of the late war, to play the part of mere automatons, and it was therefore held, by those best informed on the subject, that the secretary of the navy had no more authority over the commissioners, than the commissioners had over him, except to see that they did not go outside the duties required of them by the act of congress. They were, in fact, empowered to discharge all the ministerial duties of the department, under the superintendence of the secretary of the navy (the organ of the president); to draw up regulations for the navy, subject to the approval of the president, and to furnish such information for congress as the secretary might require; the control and and direction of the naval forces in commission being left at the discretion of the secretary. It was with this understanding that the board organized and commenced its labors. The navy being small, the machinery of the board was ample for its requirements, and a construction of the law was adopted, tending to overcome the supposed difficulties, leaving in the hands of the board the executive authority, and in those of the secretary of the navy the power which the importance of his office required him to hold. Mr. Crowninshield, of Massachusetts, then held the office of secretary of the navy, and seems to have labored harmoniously with the board, which soon prepared a system of regulations by which every person in the naval service was held to a strict accountability for his acts. It was fortunate for the service, that the secretary of the navy was disposed to coöperate with the commissioners, and instead of jealously excluding them from a knowledge of the affairs of his office, he imparted to them freely the necessary information to enable them to carry out promptly the views of the executive.

About this time, there was a disposition on the part of congress, to lay up most of the vessels of the navy, drop from the service most of the officers, and place the remainder on half pay, apparently forgetting the glorious record of the navy in the late war, and how much it had contributed towards forcing from Great Britain an honorable peace.

But the influence of the navy commissioners, aided by judicious friends, prevented the threatened dismemberment of the service.

In the early part of the year 1815, Captain Porter published, at Philadelphia, in two volumes 8vo, a *Journal of his Cruise to the Pacific.* In his dedication of the book to the "Citizens of the United States," Captain Porter deprecates criticism, but his journal was soon exposed to the attacks of the tory press of Great Britain. The most elaborate onslaught on it, was made in an article written by the celebrated William Gifford, for the *Quarterly Review*, in which a comparison is made between the achievements of Captain Porter and Blackbeard, and other notorious pirates, greatly to the advantage of the latter. To this able and bitter attack of a stipendiary of the British government, Captain Porter thought it necessary to publish a reply, which was embodied in the preface to the second edition of the *Journal*, published in 1822, of which the title is as follows: "Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean, by Captain David Porter, in the United States Frigate Essex, in the years 1812, 1813, and 1814. Second Edition. To which is now added the transactions at Valparaiso, from the period of the author's arrival, until the capture of the Essex; the fate of the party left at Madison's Island under Lieut. (now Major) Gamble; and an Introduction in which the charges contained in the Quarterly Review, of the first edition of his Journal, are examined, and the ignorance, prejudice and misrepresentations of the reviewer exposed. Embellished with engravings, in two volumes. New York, Wiley and Halsted 1822."

The book had an extensive circulation, and is written in the simple style of the old navigators, with no attempt at literary embellishment.

The bitter attack of Gifford, drew from the eccentric William Cobbett, a characteristic letter to Captain Porter, which was published in *Cobbett's Register* of April 12, 1816. Cobbett in his usual trenchant style demolishes the hireling reviewer, and shows conclusively what motives actuated his base attack on Capt. Porter.

Captain Hull left the board of commissioners, after a few months service, and Decatur, who had returned from

Algiers covered with fresh laurels, was appointed in his place. Considerable prize money had fallen to the lot of Rodgers, Decatur and Porter, and they determined to build residences in the District of Columbia. Capt. Porter accordingly purchased a farm of 157 acres on the heights, about one mile due north of the president's house, which being directly on the meridian of Washington, he called Meridian Hill. Here he erected a large and elegant mansion overlooking the city of Washington and the broad Potomac. The chain of hills, on which the house was built, forms an amphitheatre around the city, and were, at the time, covered with a fine growth of forest, the whole forming an extensive landscape which, to this day, has lost little of its beauty. Here was to be found everything that money could procure, to make the time pass pleasantly after the life of toil and warfare through which Captain Porter had passed; and here he delighted to dispense that hospitality, which made his house a place of reunion for some of the wisest and greatest in the land.

Decatur built an equally fine establishment on the corner of H. street and Lafayette square, which is still standing; and here these distinguished officers, daily extending their influence with congress and the executive, were enabled to prevent the service from being affected by any lack of congressional information, and kept it up to high water mark by the arguments they could supply to the secretary in making his annual report. They were always mindful of the adage, that "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach," and although their entertainments materially affected their financial resources, yet they were the means of bringing the naval officers in contact with the men who held the public purse strings, and who were not always inclined to be liberal where the navy was concerned.

A regular plan of increase was established by the acts of 1819, and 1820, contemplating a force of twelve line-of-battle ships, fourteen frigates of the first, and three of the second class, six sloops of war, and as many smaller vessels as circumstances might require. These enactments were modified from time to time, so as to increase the number of sloops of war, surveying vessels, etc.

As it may be interesting to see a list of vessels comprising our navy, at the end of the war with Great Britain, one is here inserted. The vessels were not all finished at the time peace was declared, but soon would have been, and there is no doubt, that the construction of these large ships had much to do, in conjunction with our victories, in bringing the enemy to terms.

List of Vessels in the U. S. Navy at the Close of the War with Great Britain, 1815.

	Guns.		Guns.
Independence,	74	Nonsuch,	14
Washington,	74	Ticonderoga,	17
Franklin,	74	Lady Provost (captured),	10
New Orleans,	74	Prometheus,	9
Chippewa,	74	Tom Bowline,	9
Guerierre,	44	Aligator,	9
United States,	44	Roanoke,	7
Constitution,	44	Hunter (captured),	10
Java,	44	Firebrand,	7
Plattsburgh,	44	Surprise,	7
Superior,	44	Hornet,	5
Constellation,	36	Ghent,	5
Congress,	36	Caledonia (captured),	3
Macedonian (captured),	36	Lynx,	5
Mohawk,	32	Despatch,	3
Confiance,	32	Asp,	3
Cyane,	28	Porcupine,	3
Saratoga,	24	Gov. Tompkins,	2
John Adams,	24	Conquest,	8
Genl. Pike,	24	Ranger,	1
Madison,	20	Lady of the Lake,	3
Alert,	20	Ontario,	1
Hornet,	18	Raven,	
Wasp,	18	Asp,	
Peacock,	18	Pert,	3
Ontario,	18	Fair American,	4
Erie,	18	Amelia,	1
Louisiana,	18	Finch (captured),	11
Niagara,	18	Chubb (captured),	11
Detroit (captured),	18	Preble,	7
Lawrence,	18	Montgomery,	6
Eagle,	18	Camel,	5
Jefferson,	18	Buffalo,	5

	Guns.		Guns.
Jones,	18	Tickler,	
Epervier (captured),	18	President,	12
Chippewa,	16	Galley Centipede,	2
Boxer,	16	Nettle,	2
Saranac,	16	Viper,	2
Linnet (captured),	16	Boxer,	2
Troup,	16	Allen,	2
Sylph,	16	Burrows,	2
Queen Charlotte (captured),	16	Alwyn,	1
Enterprise,	16	Ballard,	1
Oneida,	14	Ludlow,	1
Flambeau,	12	Wilmer,	1
Firefly,	12	Ketches Spitfire,	
Spark,	12	" Vesuvius.	
Spitfire,	11	" Vengeance.	
Torch,	10		

Captain Porter's restless nature would not permit him to sit quietly in an office attending to ministerial affairs. Before he had been a year on the board of commissioners he began to weary of the work, and we find him in 1816, submitting a plan to the president for the survey of the west coast of Mexico, the north-west coast of America, and for the exploration of the vast country between the Mississippi river and the North Pacific. His proposition was favorably considered, and two vessels were even fitted out for him, but for some unexplained reason the expedition never sailed.

It was the policy of the board of navy commissioners, to have large vessels on the stocks as nearly completed as possible, with guns, gun carriages, masts, etc., ready to be put into them at short notice, and to collect at the various naval stations, large quantities of timber, copper, iron, and naval stores. In fact, it is mainly owing to the foresight of the board of navy commissioners, that we were enabled to procure proper ship timber when the south was closed against us. Under their administration our ships were the admiration of the world, and our improvements in ordnance set Europe to thinking. The British government sent a clever naval officer, on a special mission to this country, to quietly examine our system, and in his report he declared "the organization of the

American naval department, either for administrative duties or for practical work to be the best system extant. Their ships are the best built, and their timber is unsurpassed. Their frigates are competent to cope with ships of the line, and their ships of the line with three deckers, and the whole administration of the navy is conducted with comparatively little expense."

When the navy commissioners commenced their labors, the government was in possession of several places styled navy yards, which were in fact destitute of most of the necessary appliances for building and equipping ships, they were as follows:

	Acres.	Original cost.
Navy Yard at Gosport, Va.,	16	$12,000
" " " Washington, D.C.,	37	4000
" " " Philadelphia, Pa.,	11	37,060
" " " Brooklyn, N. Y.,	40	40,000
" " " Charlestown, Mass.,	34	3,900
" " " Portsmouth, N. H.,	58	5,000

These yards were purchased under the act of Feb. 25, 1799, which authorized the construction of six 74 gun ships. There was no special appropriation for their purchase, but it was a case of necessity, for in building ships of war in private yards, great losses were sustained, for want of room to make a proper disposition of the timber, and from various other causes. On these lands, purchased by government, have been built the docks, ship houses, rope walks, founderies, shops, storehouses and all the other necessary constituents of a navy yard. For many years there was not a single dock, in any of our navy yards, and the first appliance for taking a ship out of water owned by our government, was invented by Commodore John Rodgers. This was erected at the Washington yard, in 1821, at an expense of $45,000, and consisted of an inclined plane with various fixtures, an apparatus for hauling up ships and a house to preserve them from the weather. It was owing to the commissioners that dry docks were at last constructed, and a thousand other things were done, which saved millions to the government, while preventing the navy from lapsing into inefficiency, during a period of profound peace.

About the year 1822, Captain Porter received a serious injury. An inventor was showing a patent gun lock in the navy commissioners' office, when a chamber exploded, and one of the fragments striking the Captain's hand, it was severely fractured. This laid him up for some time, and he never recovered the entire use of the injured member.

During his residence at Meridian Hill, Captain Porter became much interested in farming. His friend, Mr. John Skinner, was the editor of an agricultural paper, and the various hints in regard to the proper cultivation of the soil, the Captain endeavored to put in practice on his gravelly land, where crops did not seem to thrive. In truth, though an excellent sailor, he was no judge of land for farming purposes, though if he had suspected the existence of that deposit of white sand under his estate, which since the establishment of the board of public works has been made manifest, he might have made the place pay good dividends. James K. Paulding, an intimate friend of Captain Porter, in his amusing book, *John Bull in America*, good naturedly satirizes the nautical hero's system of farming.

All sailors imagine themselves competent to manage a farm, and are never satisfied until they own one. The historic Pennsylvania Dutchman may not have understood the theory of farming, but in practice he was certainly successful, for what vegetables he could not sell, he gave to the pigs, and what the pigs wouldn't eat he ate himself. The Captain on the other hand, was so proud of his farming, that he supplied his acquaintances with the best of vegetables for nothing. He had a kitchen garden of five acres, and had to buy vegetables for winter; he had a hundred acres in corn, oats, wheat, &c., and was obliged to purchase grain for his stock. He imported English bulls, at twelve hundred dollars apiece, people would not patronize them. He had the finest piggery in the country, but alas, it did not pay. Thousands of cart loads of manure were hauled upon the farm, only to be washed away by the spring rains; the place was in beautiful order, highly satisfactory to the casual observer, but it yielded absolutely nothing.

The Captain then introduced an English farmer on the

premises, established him with his family in a beautiful little farm house, and supplied him with half a dozen assistants. At the end of the year, the crops realized just about enough to pay the expenses of this party, without any overplus in the way of profit. On the whole, Captain Porter found that he had been more successful in ploughing the sea than he was ever likely to be in ploughing *terra firma*. Still his farming was a great source of recreation to him, and not wishing to let it run down he formed, in company with a few friends, a joint stock company for the purpose of running a horse boat between Washington and Alexandria. This scheme promised to be a great success, as the only communication between the two cities was by a lumbering old stage coach, but the speculation ultimately proved a bad one. The new mode of conveyance was slower than the old coach, and the boat frequently gave out on the journey; the Captain gave free tickets to all his friends, and after awhile the ferry boat was withdrawn from the route and used for transporting passengers from Georgetown across the river, to Analostan island.

In looking over the Captain's papers, it is curious to see how little he thought of his own personal advantage in this and in other enterprises, and how many dead heads were included with the traveling public in this boat enterprise. These incidents are mentioned to show the peculiarly restless disposition of the man, who labored so hard without apparently having any pecuniary object. He remained a member of the board of navy commissioners, until the 31st December, 1822, when he sought active service afloat.

During the conflict between Spain and her South American colonies, which finally resulted in the independence of the latter, a system of piracy grew up which was very detrimental to the commerce of the United States. The Spanish cruisers and privateers, employed in blockading the ports of the revolutionary states, were constantly capturing our merchant vessels, under the pretense that they had violated what the United States government considered merely a paper blockade; and so many complications had arisen, that it was determined to dispatch a squadron to the West Indies to protect American interests.

Besides the above mentioned source of trouble, the way in which the war had been carried on, by a system of legalized piracy, had produced a very low state of morals among the Spanish seamen, which, in the absence of sufficient power to repress it, broke out into piracy of the worst kind, filling the West Indian annals with accounts of horrors, that seem almost incredible in these days. The coasts of Cuba, Porto Rico, St. Domingo and the Spanish main, were the resorts of merciless freebooters who plundered and burned vessels with impunity, and frequently murdered their passengers and crews, after inflicting upon them the most shocking brutalities. Families bound to the West Indies, in merchant vessels, disappeared from the face of the earth, and often the only clue to the fate of passengers and crew, would be the charred hull of their vessel drifting about the gulf of Mexico.

At length, the numerous tales of horror aroused the indignation of the American people, and they demanded that the government should protect their merchant vessels from these bloody buccaneers. A number of small vessels were accordingly dispatched to the West Indies, but were so hampered by their instructions, that they were obliged to surrender all pirates captured in Spanish American waters, to the Cuban authorities for punishment, who, after a mockery of a trial, often released the wretches, to commence anew their depredations. The captures made by these vessels had little effect in suppressing piracy, and in 1822, a large squadron was sent to the West Indies under Commodore Biddle. This squadron consisted of the frigates Macedonian and Congress, sloops John Adams and Peacock, and schooners Alligator, Grampus, Shark and Porpoise, mounting 178 guns, and with a complement of 1,330 men. This squadron performed the service required, with as much efficiency as could have been expected, under the circumstances, most of the vessels being too large to follow the pirates into the shallow waters and secret retreats, with which the West Indies abounded. It was strongly suspected also, that many of the Spanish officials connived at the depredations on American commerce, finding it more lucrative to protect the freebooters than to give them up to justice. Piracy, instead of diminish-

ing on the arrival of a stronger squadron, was actually on the increase, and outrages on Americans were more frequent than ever.

Under these circumstances, the navy department was harassed with appeals to rid the sea of these wretches, and the newspapers were filled with complaints of the remissness of our naval officers, in the West Indies, who were doing all that could be done under the circumstances, as many brave encounters with the pirates in and about the island of Cuba testified. Under these circumstances, the government was glad to accept Capt. Porter's offer, to resign his position as a navy commissioner, and take command of the West India squadron, and he accepted the duty with the understanding, that he was to fit out a force adequate to meet the wants of the occasion.

The following anecdotes may serve to illustrate Commodore Porter's character about this time of his life. Like all other men he had his imperfections, and it would be unreasonable to suppose him free from human frailties. His very peculiarties show the strength of his character. His temper was very quick, and he would flash up like powder, at anything he considered in the least insulting, or showing a want of respect towards him. No man is a hero in the eyes of his wife, or valet, unless he is a very milk and water fellow indeed, and parts his hair in the middle. We are apt to picture to ourselves a great man as always calm and dispassionate, never losing his dignity, and free from the passions of the mass of mankind, like Scipio Africanus. Few heroes were ever moulded out of such stuff as this. Even the immortal Washington may have chastised his little darkies when he had the toothache, or scolded Martha when he had to scoop around under the bed with a bootjack to find his slippers. It is unlikely that the wise Solomon kept his temper when he cracked his crazy bone, and Job, the most patient man on record, forgot himself so far as to wish his enemy might write a book. We can imagine Pharaoh swearing worse than the army in Flanders, when Moses turned the grasshoppers into his favorite pasture, and raised the price of fine tooth combs in Egypt when he distributed his other favors. It is said, that Andrew

Jackson would tear his shirt in two, if he found that Mother Jackson had neglected to sew on the buttons. Think of how Alexander the Great would abuse his wife, if called upon to get up in the middle of the night and make pap for the baby, how Ferdinand of Castile railed at Isabella when she forgot to put his boots outside the door to be blacked; how Socrates swore with "true inwardness" when he tore his trowsers on the ragged edge of nothing, or how B. Franklin would howl when his form was knocked into pi.

If these illustrious philosophers could thus let their temper get the better of their judgment, is it at all wonderful that an impulsive sailor, who made no claims to philosophy, should sometimes allow his feelings to get the better of him. However, it was only in trifles, that Commodore Porter lost his self control; in his intercourse with men in manner and language he generally observed the most perfect decorum, and often under great provocation maintained perfect command of his temper. It was only among his immediate family that he felt licensed to show, that after all he was only human.

Among the things he had collected about him for his amusement, was a lot of beautiful Barbary pigeons, which had increased and multiplied to an extraordinary degree. On a beautiful day in July, 1823, these birds were sunning themselves on the top of a fanciful building erected for their accommodation, and perhaps congratulating themselves on the happiness of their condition. At this moment one of the Commodore's sons — which one it is not necessary to mention — thought it would be an excellent opportunity to try his skill on the unsuspecting pigeons with his father's double barrelled Joe Manton. The youngster sagely concluded, that three or four birds would not be missed among so many, and he promised himself great pleasure in presenting the trophies of his skill as a marksman, to a friend in the neighborhood who was fond of pigeon pie. After mature deliberation, and a careful calculation whether the fun of shooting the pigeons would compensate for the punishment he was sure to receive, if found out (a kind of mental exercise he has often since indulged in), and then not caring a continental

what might be the result, the youth let drive both barrels into the midst of the Barbary birds, raking them more than he ever raked anything before or since. The slaughter was terrible, the pigeons dropped by the dozen, and many of the flying wounded were distributed over the fields, along the roads, in the garden, and on the housetop. The youngster was delighted, for the result had exceeded his most sanguine expectations; he had not supposed that even a Joe Manton could do such execution. He smiled complacently, laid the gun aside, and climbed a cherry tree with a young friend of his to regale himself on forbidden fruit.

Just at that moment the Commodore was returning home on horse back, and as he ascended the hill he heard the report of the gun and saw his pigeons reeling in the air, and one of them dropping at his feet. Seeing the boys in the tree, and the gun leaning against the gate he at once took in the situation, and quietly dismounting he crept softly up to the tree unnoticed by the culprits, who were busy in appropriating the cherries. "Who killed these pigeons," shouted the Commodore. The young Porter supposing his father was in the city, and mistaking the voice for that of his pigeon pie loving friend at the foot of the hill, sung out, "I did Uncle Tom, and the old man 'll have to send a sloop of war to Tunis to get a supply, for there's dead ones enough to keep you in pigeon pie for a month, so pick 'em up before Pop comes home;" but when the young sportsman heard the order to come down, and recognized his father's voice, he fairly shook in his shoes.

As he approached the ground he received a smart cut with a horse whip on the most vulnerable point of juvenile anatomy, but before a second dose could be administered the youngster jumped to the ground and took to his heels, pursued by the Commodore, who called on the young rascal to stop, and threatening the direst vengeance when he should overtake him. Around the circle they went, the Commodore highly indignant at this piece of disrespect, and after making two turns without gaining on the boy the senior began to give out, when the young hopeful sang out over his shoulder: "Pop if you didn't chase the

British better than that, no wonder you made so little prize money." The Commodore could not help laughing, and regaining his good humor was struck with the absurdity of getting angry at such a small matter; but though his good humor had returned he thought proper to give the other boy a good thrashing for concealing himself in the branches, instead of coming down like a man and taking his share of blame.

No doubt he felt better after performing this act of duty, but he made a bargain with his son, that the latter should own half the pigeons and look after them, and never again exhibit his skill with a Joe Manton in that direction.

The Commodore, though fond of practical jokes, did not like them carried too far. He had a coachman named Nathan in the house, who died from bilious fever. A few days after this man's death, the servants in the kitchen were much alarmed at a strange figure that was seen every night in the cellar, declaring it to be the ghost of the coachman. Every night, at eleven o'clock, they would all rush up stairs shouting out that the ghost was in the cellar and throw the whole house into confusion. The Commodore, convinced that there was some trickery in the matter, kept a strict watch, and one night saw through the cellar window the ghost entering with a lighted candle in its hand. It proved to be an English girl he had in his employ, dressed in a long night gown and with her face sprinkled with flour. The next night the Commodore was dressed betimes, to resemble the dead man, and with his face and hands well blacked stood with a wood saw in his hand ready to begin operations on a log as soon as the ghost should make its appearance. Presently, he heard a footstep descending the stairs, and saw the glimmer of a light through the door. He then commenced sawing and the ghost entered, expecting to frighten the servant whom she supposed was sawing wood for the morning fires, but when she got close to the woodsawyer, he rested from his labors and said in a sepulchral voice: "Miss Jane, God Almighty done sent me for you." The frightened woman sank shrieking to the ground, then jumping to her feet she rushed frantically from the house, and took to the woods, the coachman's ghost shouting after

her. The woman nearly died of fright, but was effectually cured of any desire to play the ghost again.

Next to the Commodore's place on Meridian Hill, the present Columbia college was established, which was in some respects a nuisance, the boys constantly trespassing upon the farm and robbing his orchard. Instead of complaining to the faculty, the Commodore one day went to the ground where the boys were at play and called them around him. He told them that he was sorry to see that some of their number were disposed to commit depredations, that such things were dishonorable, and, that they might have no excuse for such actions he would in future reserve for their use the outer row of apple trees, about a quarter of a mile in length, warning them not to trespass on the others. The youngsters gave him three cheers, and promised to stick to the bargain. Only one of their number violated the agreement, and he received a sound horsewhipping at the hands of the Commodore. This culprit later in life became a member of congress, and although he harbored no animosity against the Commodore, never forgot the horsewhipping, and never afterwards liked the taste of apples.

The Commodore was never so much oppressed by the cares of office as to lay aside his chivalric feelings. One day riding in to his court martial from Meridian Hill, he noticed a lady leading a small dog by a ribbon, while a constable, armed with a double barrelled gun, was dodging around her endeavoring to shoot the little animal, on the ground that an order had been issued requiring him to kill all dogs found in the street. The lady pleaded earnestly for the life of her favorite, but without avail, for the ruthless constable fired and killed the dog before her eyes. The Commodore witnessed this transaction too late to prevent the catastrophe, but jumping from his horse he ran to the spot and gave the man such a chastisement with his horsewhip, that he took to his heels, leaving his gun, which the Commodore smashed to pieces against a lamp post.

On another occasion he was requested to act as one of the managers at a ball, given by the citizens of Washington. Against one lady, whom it was proposed to invite, certain of the managers took exception, on the ground of reports against her character. The Commodore was not

present at the meeting where this matter was discussed, but heard of the affair just before the company assembled, and learned that a committee would be appointed to lead the lady from the ball room should she appear upon the floor. The Commodore never tolerated oppression, and was always ready to take up the gauntlet where a lady was concerned. He considered the conduct of the committee contemptible in the extreme, and believed the reports against the lady exaggerated. Taking his stand near the dressing room he said to her as she came out, "Take my arm Madam, and give yourself no uneasiness about what may occur," and they advanced into the ball room. The committee were standing near the door, and to them the Commodore remarked: "I will hold any one personally responsible who attempts in any way to interfere with this lady, whom I take under my particular charge." The committee did not feel disposed to encounter the anger of the fiery sailor, in whose eye they plainly saw mischief. It only remains to say that the injured lady received as much attention at that ball as any one.

Such acts as these gave the Commodore great popularity, and made him friends in all quarters where he cared to have them, for he did not wish to be friendly with *mean men*, and took no trouble to conceal his aversion to them.

Difficulty with Decatur.— Decatur, although one of the most gallant officers in the navy, was not a man of great administrative abilities, nor did he at first thoroughly appreciate the necessities of the service, while holding the office of navy commissioner. He was of an arbitrary disposition, and like all the old sea dogs of 1812, liked to have his own way. The several duties of navy commissioners were divided among the three members of the board, but Commodore Decatur was constantly interfering in the duties allotted to his colleagues. On one occasion, he ventured to oppose some action of Commodore Porter's, who objected to the proposition, when Decatur in a pet declared that *he* was of no use on the board, for Commodore Rodgers and Porter always voted against him. When Porter turning quickly upon him said: "Commodore Decatur, what you say is untrue, and your complaints are frivolous, and I hold myself responsible for what I say."

Decatur did not wait to hear any more, but flung himself out of the office. Commodore Rodgers, who was always coolheaded and generally a peace maker, anticipated that Decatur would take notice of the remark; but after staying away two or three days Decatur returned in better humor, and the old friendship was not in the least disturbed. This was about the only difficulty that took place, while the Commodore held the office of navy commissioner.

CHAPTER XVII.

COMMODORE Porter received orders from the Honorable Smith Thompson, secretary of the navy, on the first of February, 1823, to command the West India squadron, and as his letter of instructions has an important bearing on the events of the cruise, and will hereafter be frequently referred to, we insert it entire.

Navy Department, Feb. 1, 1823.

Sir: You have been appointed to the command of a squadron fitted out, under an act of congress of the 20th of December last, to cruise in the West India seas and the Gulf of Mexico, *for the purpose of repressing piracy, and affording effectual protection to the citizens and commerce of the United States.*

Your attention will also be extended to the suppression of the slave trade, according to the provisions of the several acts of congress, on that subject; copies of which, and of the instructions heretofore given to our naval commanders thereon, are herewith sent to you.

While it is your duty to protect our commerce against all unlawful interruption, and to guard the rights, both of *person* and *property*, of the *citizens* of the United States, *wherever* it shall become necessary, you will observe the utmost caution not to encroach upon the rights of others; and should you, at any time, be brought into discussion, or collision with any foreign power, in relation to such

rights, it will be *expedient* and *proper* that the same should be conducted with as much *moderation* and *forbearance*, as is consistent with the *honor* of your country, and the just claims of its *citizens*.

Should you, in your cruise, fall in with any foreign naval force engaged in the suppression of piracy, it is desirable that harmony and good understanding should be cultivated between you; and you will do everything, on your part, that accords with the honor of the American flag, to promote this object.

So soon as the vessels at Norfolk shall be ready for sea, you will proceed to the West Indies, by such route as you shall judge best, for the purpose of effecting the object of your cruise. You will establish at Thompson's island, usually called Key West, a depot, and land the ordnance and marines to protect the stores and provisions; if, however, you shall find any important objections to this place, and a more suitable and convenient one can be found, you are at liberty to select it as a depot.

You will announce your arrival and object, to the authorities, civil and military, of the island of Cuba, and endeavor to obtain, as far as shall be practicable, their co-operation; or at least their favorable and friendly support, giving them the most unequivocal assurance, that your sole object is the destruction of pirates.

The system of piracy which has grown up in the West Indies, has obviously arisen from the war between Spain and the new governments, her late provinces in this hemisphere; and from the limited force in the islands, and their sparse population, many portions of each being entirely uninhabited and desolate, to which the *active authority* of the *government* does not extend. It is understood that establishments have been made by parties of these banditti, in those uninhabited parts, to which they carry their plunder, and retreat in time of danger. It *cannot* be *presumed*, that the government of any island will afford any protection, or countenance, to such robbers. It may, on the contrary, *confidently be believed*, that all governments, and particularly those most exposed, will afford all means in their power for their suppresssion.

Pirates are considered, by the law of nations, the enemies of the human race. It is the *duty* of *all nations* to put them down; and none, who respect their own character or interest, will refuse to do it, much less afford them an asylum and protection. The nation that makes the greatest exertions to suppress such banditti, has the greatest merit. In making such exertions, it has a *right* to the *aid* of every other power, to the extent of its means, and to the enjoyment, under its sanction, of all its rights in the pursuit of the object. In the case of belligerents, where the army of one party enters the territory of a neutral power, the army of the other has a right to

follow it there. In the case of *pirates*, the right of the armed force of one power to follow them into the territory of another, is more complete. In regard to pirates, there is no *neutral* party; they being the enemies of the human race, all nations are parties against them, and may be considered as *allies*.

The object and intention of our government is, to respect the feelings as well as the rights of others, both in substance and in form, in all the measures which may be adopted to accomplish the end in view. Should, therefore, the crews of any vessels which you have seen engaged in acts of piracy, or which you have just cause to suspect of being of that character, retreat into the ports, harbors, or settled parts of the islands, you may enter in pursuit of them, such ports, harbors, and settled parts of the country, for the purpose of aiding the local authorities, or people, as the case may be, to seize and bring the offenders to justice; previously giving notice that this is your sole object. Where a government exists and is felt, you will in all instances respect the local authorities, and only act in aid of and in coöperation with them; it being the exclusive purpose of the government of the United States to suppress piracy, an object in which all nations are equally interested; and in the accomplishment of which, the *Spanish authorities* and *people* will, it is *presumed*, cordially coöperate with you. If, in the pursuit of pirates found at sea, they shall retreat into the unsettled parts of the islands, or foreign territory, you are at liberty to pursue them so long only, as there is reasonable prospect of being able to apprehend them; and in no case are you at liberty to pursue and apprehend any one, after having been forbidden so to do by competent authority of the local government.

And should you, on such pursuit, apprehend any pirates upon land, you will deliver them over to the proper authority, to be dealt with according to law; and you will furnish such evidence, as shall be in your power, to prove the offense alleged against them. Should the local authorities refuse to receive and prosecute such persons, so apprehended, on your furnishing them with reasonable evidence of their guilt, you will then keep them safely and securely, on board some of the vessels under your command, and report without delay to this department, the particular circumstances of such cases.

Great complaints are made of the interruption and injury to our commere, by privateers fitted out from Spanish ports. You will endeavor to obtain, from the Spanish authorities, a list of the vessels so commissioned, and ascertain how far they have been instructed to intercept our trade with Mexico and the Colombian Republic; impressing upon them, that according to the well settled rule of the law of nations, the United States will not consider any portion of the

coast, upon the Gulf of Mexico, as legally blockaded, except where a naval force is stationed, sufficient to carry into effect the blockading order or decree; and that this government does not recognize the right, or authority of Spain, to interdict or interrupt our commerce with any portion of the coast, included within the Colombian Republic or Mexican government, not actually blockaded by a competent force.

All the United States ships and vessels of war in the West Indies, of which a list is herewith enclosed, are placed under your command, and you will distribute them to such stations, as shall appear to you best calculated to afford complete protection to our commerce, in which you will embrace the object of protecting the convoy of specie from Vera Cruz, and the Mexican coast generally, to the United States. Keep one vessel at least upon this service, to be at or near Vera Cruz, during the healthy season of the year, and to be relieved as occasion shall require, both for convoy of trade, and to bring specie to the United States, confining the transportation to the United States only.

You will be particularly watchful to preserve the health of the officers and crews under your command, and to guard, in every possible manner, against the unhealthiness of the climate; not permitting any intercourse with the shore where the yellow fever prevails, except in cases of absolute necessity.

Wishing you good health, and a successful cruise, I am,

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

Com. David Porter, commanding
U. S. Naval Forces, West Indies, Present.

SMITH THOMPSON.

While his instructions were preparing, Commodore Porter was authorized to proceed north, and purchase vessels of light draft, suitable for following pirates among the shoals and secret hiding places of the West Indies. With this view, he purchased at Baltimore eight schooners called bay boats, very fast sailers; but, as they were at the time loaded with firewood for market, they did not much resemble vessels of war. They were sent to the navy yards at Norfolk and New York, and there fitted for service, and named as follows:

	Tons.	Guns.	Men.		Tons.	Guns.	Men.
Fox,	51	3	31	Terrier,	61	3	31
Greyhound,	65	3	31	Weasel,	53	3	31
Jackall,	47	3	31	Wild Cat,	48	3	31
Beagle,	52	3	31	Ferret,	51	3	31

At New York, the Commodore purchased a storeship, which he named the Decoy, and a steam vessel, the Sea Gull, which was originally built for a Jersey city ferry boat, and was about half the size of those now in use. The Decoy, whose name indicated her character, mounted six guns, the Sea Gull three; the latter was rigged as a steam galliot, and made a very respectable appearance, although the croakers predicted that she would founder at sea in the first blow.

Besides the above, the Commodore had constructed five large barges, each pulling twenty oars, and named Musquito, Gnat, Midge, Sandfly, and Gallinipper.

The vessels then in the West Indies, were the sloops of war, John Adams, Peacock, and Hornet, and the schooners Spark, Shark and Grampus. The whole squadron consisted of 16 vessels, 1150 seamen and marines, and 133 guns; a small force for so important a service, but the commander-in-chief determined, by imposing extra labor upon his officers and men, to make it adequate to the occasion.

The Commodore hoisted his broad pendant on board the Peacock, and proceeded to sea with all the vessels of the squadron, on the 14th of February, 1823. As the United States government had not placed itself in communication with the Spanish authorities in relation to the suppression of piracy, through our naval officers, Commodore Porter deemed it his duty to do so on the first opportunity.

Great publicity had been given, by the press of this country, to the movements of the vessels of the squadron, and much comment had been made on the increased force the United States were about to send to the West Indies, with the double purpose of suppressing piracy and vindicating our commercial rights, by raising those paper blockades on the Spanish main, which our government with characteristic weakness had suffered to exist, unnoticed, until compelled by public clamor to take some action. Even when the government did move in the matter, they reduced the force which it was originally intended to put under Com. Porter's orders, by several vessels, including two frigates, notwithstanding his urgent application to the department to be allowed at least one vessel of this class, as

a naval head quarters, in which to perform the duties appertaining to such a command.

His first visit was to the Island of Porto Rico, where he wrote to the governor, on the 4th of March, and disclosed to him fully the objects that brought him to the West Indies, and invoked his excellency's aid in the suppression of piracy, an object in which the civilized world had a common interest with the governments of the West India islands. The West India governors had, hitherto, been so lukewarm in the pursuit of pirates, as to subject them to the suspicion of being personally interested in the nefarious transactions which took place almost under their eyes. Lieut. John Porter, of the Greyhound, was the bearer of this communication, and the schooner Fox, Lieut. Cocke, was sent into the harbor of St. Johns to bring back an answer. As the Fox stood in, a shot was fired over her from the fort, which not being noticed a second was aimed directly at her, killing Lieut. Cocke on the spot. The fort did not cease firing until the schooner anchored under its guns. There was no excuse for this conduct on the part of the Spaniards, as the schooner had the American flag flying, and there was no restriction against a vessel of war entering a Spanish port, at any time between sunrise and sunset. It seems that the governor being absent from the city, the commander of the fort took upon himself the responsibility of prohibiting the entrance of any vessel belonging to the strange squadron seen outside, whose character he did not understand, and this was the only satisfaction that could be obtained. Thus at the outset of his expedition, Commodore Porter found himself involved in difficulties with the Spanish authorities, who wantonly fired on the American flag with hardly the shadow of a reason to give for so doing.

The Commodore immediately wrote to the governor, demanding information relative to this unwarrantable proceeding (he had not yet received an answer to his former letter), which closed as follows:

"It will afford me sincere pleasure, should I be so fortunate as to fulfill the expectations of my government, and at the same time preserve harmony and a good understanding with those with whom I may be so unfortunate as to come into collision, or discussion, in

relation thereto; indeed, it will add much to my happiness if it can be avoided altogether."

In his second letter, after narrating the fact of the case, he proceeds to say:

"On the arrival of the Fox within gunshot of the castle, I was much surprised to observe that six guns were fired at her, but knowing of no cause to justify such an act of violence, I should have thought I had been mistaken had not the commander of the three vessels failed to obey my instructions, which could not have happened, but for some violent detention by the authorities at St. Johns.

"Until I am better satisfied of the fact, however, I shall refrain from the expression of my sentiments on the subject, and shall for the present merely observe, that the character of the vessels could not have been misunderstood, as my squadron at the time of the departure of the Fox was lying in full view of the castle, with colors flying, and a British squadron, under command of Sir Thomas Cochrane (which had several times communicated with me and well knew the vessels), arrived there the day previous to the last mentioned vessel, and on the day of my arrival off the port.

"I know not whether my suspicions are correct, but I have, in the event of their being so, directed the senior officer to abandon the vessels and leave the island of Porto Rico, as soon as possible, leaving it to my government (to which I shall make known the facts), to resent the outrage as it may think proper, and which it will no doubt promptly and effectually do.

"Your Excellency must be aware, that it is always in my power to retaliate, and even in this place, but it would be a poor return for the friendship and hospitality I have received from the inhabitants, and I cannot reconcile to myself that the innocent should be made to suffer for offenses not their own."

When you engage in a written correspondence with a high Spanish functionary, there is no knowing when it will terminate; for these gentlemen have a peculiar faculty of maintaining the affair, until they have wearied out their opponent, and are really so plausible as to (almost) convince a man against the evidence of his senses. The governor of Porto Rico embellished his communications with all those flowers of rhetoric so common in the Castilian tongue, and a novice would have supposed that the death of Lieut. Cocke had afflicted him with a grief from which he could never hope to recover, but he tried to shift all the blame

upon the shoulders of the Americans, on the "ground that an expedition against Spain had, the year previous, been armed in the waters of the United States and had entered the harbor of St. Bartholomew with the American flag flying;" that when the officers of the first vessels that entered met the captain of the port, they had informed him that Spain had ceded Porto Rico to the United States, and from their not presenting a writing from the Commodore, he had seen something alarming in these rumors. His excellency concluded in true Spanish style.

"The remissness of the officer, and the pertinacity of him who commanded, in not suspending his entering, in spite of the firing from the port, and without waiting for a pilot, but notwithstanding this and the second discharge of a gun at an elevation, to crowd sail in order to gain the port. These acts, most excellent Sir, have been the means of depriving the United States of a citizen, your Excellency of an officer, and of filling Porto Rico with mourning, and myself with inexpressible sorrow. I feel it to be my duty to assure your excellency, that the orders issued by the king's officer and commandant general of the place, were by no means intended to commit hostilities, or offenses against the vessels, but as the firing was made at an elevation, either the trembling of the sea, or some bad pointing, must have been the cause why the fourth discharge should produce such a fatal effect." (!)

This effusion ended with,

May God grant your Excellency many years,
Most excellent Sir.

To the most Excellent MIGUEL DE LA TORRE.
Commander in Chief of the Anglo American Squadron
in the offing at Porto Rico, D. David Porter.

After this affair, Commodore Porter divided his squadron into detachments around the Island of Cuba, and so energetic were the commanders, that the pirates were obliged to abandon the sea and take to the land, operating in large bands and carrying consternation among the inhabitants. Foreign merchants were among the sufferers, and some of them lost thousands of dollars worth of goods, carried off right under the eyes of the authorities.

Very exaggerated accounts of piracies were current in the United States, and in April, severe strictures were made

by the press in regard to the want of vigilance of the American squadron—which had hardly got on the cruising ground. The *New York Evening Post* of April 10th, 1823, animadverted in strong terms on the incapacity of the fleet, and the article drew from Com. Porter a letter to the editor, which showed conclusively, that in the short time he had been in command in the West Indies, piracy at sea was almost annihilated, and was confined to the land, over which he had no control. Now it seems to us, that the Commodore was unnecessarily sensitive in regard to these misrepresentations, for the best and bravest officer that ever lived would not escape detraction, but he keenly felt the injustice heaped upon him by editors of the press, who took their cue from certain American merchants who wished the whole squadron to be at their disposal.

To show what was being done, we find Capt. Cassin of the Peacock reports the capture (by the Gallinipper), on the 16th April, of a pirate sloop, inside the reef at Cape Blanco. The same day, the Peacock anchored in a noted harbor for pirates, which she no sooner did, than a piratical felucca was seen standing out for the Gallinipper. On opening the vessels, she lowered her sails and pulled around a point of the island. Chase was given, and she was finally captured in a secret cove, where she had been hastily covered with bushes. When the pirates found that their vessel was discovered, they opened a fire of musketry and then fled to the woods, where a running fight took place, till the rovers finding themselves hard pressed, threw away their arms and everything else they carried, in order to effect their escape. The prize was a beautiful vessel, just built for pirating, and pulled sixteen oars. A quantity of merchandise was recaptured, and the settlement of the pirates burned. The Pilot, a piratical schooner, had been previously recaptured and sent to Havana, as a warning to the friends of these gentry, that the Yankees were after them.

Lieut. Commandant Kearney reports breaking up a nest of pirates at Cape Cruz, where eight boats were captured, together with a four pounder, and two swivels mounted as a battery. In one intricate cave were found various articles of plunder, and some human bones. Among the pirates captured, were two women, one of them the wife

of the captain of the gang, who was then in prison in the interior of the island for burning an English brig. This woman was a second Helen McGregor, and fought desperately before she was captured. Even the children, who were too young to fight, helped the old men light the signal fires, to give notice of the approach of the Americans. Lieut. Kearney also secured the arrest and condemnation of a pirate, who had committed an outrage on three American vessels.

It must be remembered that to catch these freebooters, who only ventured out in boats (living in secret hiding places on shore), it was necessary to invade the territory of Spain, where questions would arise as to the propriety of landing armed forces and destroying property. It, therefore, was not unfrequently the case, that our sailors had to land and receive the fire of the pirates in ambush, while discussing the propriety of injuring a horde of freebooters, who would often give as an excuse for their own conduct, to the Spanish authorities, that they took the strangers for Columbian privateersmen.

On the 10th of May, 1823, the Commodore reports to the secretary of the navy: "our last cruise has been most arduous and fatiguing, and although we have not many trophies to show, it has not been without effect. The result has been the capture of one piratical schooner, and a very fine felucca, and the destruction of one building, the burning of three schooners in the Rio Palmas, and about a dozen piratical houses in the different establishments to leeward of Bahia Honda; the complete dispersion of all piratical gangs from Rio Palmas to Cape Antonio; and what will be of great importance in our future operations, we have gained a thorough knowledge of all the coast from Cape Blanco, down to Cape Antonio on the west. When I left Matanzas, the country was alarmed by large bands of robbers who had plundered several estates, and committed some murders in the neighborhood of the city. Bodies of horsemen were sent in pursuit of them, and the militia were all under arms. Some prisoners had been taken, and it was said that these bands were composed of the freebooters which lately infested the coast, who having been com-

pelled to abandon the ocean had taken up this new line of business."

The following is a summary of what was accomplished by Commodore Porter, forty-three days after sailing with his squadron from the United States. The day of his arrival at Porto Rico he dispatched a division of schooners to the south side of the island to protect American commerce. He was detained at Porto Rico seven days on matters previously referred to, during which time, he caused the blockade of the Spanish main, which had heretofore existed, to be raised. After leaving Porto Rico, he divided his squadron into detachments, and sent some to the north, and some to the south side of Cuba and St. Domingo, examining every nook where a pirate would likely be stowed away. After scouring the West Indies, the Commodore arrived in the Peacock at Matanzas, with only two officers and scarcely men enough to work the ship, all the boats and every officer and man that could be spared, having been sent three hundred miles to the windward among the keys in search of pirates. He then established his head quarters at Key West, built storehouses and a hospital, and fitted out his vessels and barges afresh, and sent them to the south side of Cuba, forming convoys so that every American vessel could sail under protection. He recaptured an American schooner that had been captured and fitted out by the pirates, and destroyed her crew.

Thus, in a short time after his arrival on the coast, piracy was completely broken up, and our merchant vessels were as free to traverse the West Indies as they are to-day, the pirates fleeing to the interior out of the reach of the squadron, where they were only amenable to the laws of Spain. The press, however, complained that vessels on the *high seas* did not fall in with the squadron! never considering that the place to find the pirates was among the inaccessible islands and keys, in mangrove swamps, amid obstacles that would daunt all except the stoutest hearts. In the pursuit of these murderous freebooters, our officers and men were exposed for weeks at a time, in open boats, to the baneful influences of a pestilential climate, and to constant danger from pirates in ambush.

Before Com. Porter's arrival in the West Indies, the coasts

swarmed with pirates, and at the principal ports there were many vessels, not daring to go to sea without a convoy. Not a single capture had been made, and no information could be obtained of the freebooters, as they had temporarily abandoned their pursuits at sea and mingled with the sympathizing population of the islands.

In speaking of the ungenerous attacks upon him and his officers by the American press, Com. Porter truly says: "Three years since, five schooners, mounting sixty guns and carrying five hundred men, were built for the suppression of piracy, and these in addition to a frigate, three sloops of war and some smaller vessels, with a large British force carrying 1200 men, have ever since been cruising here. If they could not suppress piracy with all their means in so long a time, with what justice can the inquiry be made, why in twenty days after my departure from the United States, the squadron of small craft under my command has done so little.

It is certain, that the force under Com. Porter's command was wholly inadequate for the service, and the duty devolving on officers and men was very severe. They would start in open boats from Key West, cross the gulf, and on their return after a month or more of absence, would look not unlike the freebooters they went in pursuit of. During these arduous expeditions, there were many exciting scenes, and never did men display greater courage and endurance. The conflicts with the pirates were frequently desperate, as the villains never gave nor asked for quarter, and few prisoners were taken, as the atrocities committed on unarmed merchant vessels placed the freebooters out of the pale of mercy.

To show the character of the people with whom our sailors had to deal, the following story of the schooner Catalina, commanded by the celebrated pirate, Diablito, may not be uninteresting. Some three months after Commodore Porter's arrival, he heard of some piracies having been committed on the south side of Cuba, and, with his usual promptitude, fitted out an expedition (to go in search of the marauders), consisting of the barges Gallinipper and Musquito with thirty-one officers and men under command of Lieut. Watson. Cruising in Seguipa

bay (a noted place for pirates), the barges discovered a large two topsail schooner in company with a launch working up to an anchorage, where a number of merchant vessels were lying. As the schooner's decks were filled with men, and she was armed with guns, it was quite evident that she was a pirate; and Lieut. Watson, thereupon, hoisted the American flag and steered towards her, when the pirate hoisted the Spanish ensign and opened fire. Both barges now ran down with the intention of boarding, which, as the schooner had brailed up her foresail, there seemed every prospect of doing. To avoid this the pirates made sail again, and as both their vessels were fast, it was feared that they would escape. The barges, however, compelled the launch and schooner to run in shore, where they anchored with springs on their cables and prepared to meet the Americans. As the barges closed, the schooner opened on them from her long gun, loaded with grape, but fortunately did no damage. The pirates then opened a rapid fire with small arms; but, although the balls flew thick, no one in the barges was injured. The sailors then boarded with a cheer and the watchword Allen, the name of a young officer who was killed a few months before by the pirates. The freebooters now jumped overboard, and sought to swim to the shore, but were pursued by the barges, and an indiscriminate slaughter of the villains took place. The launch, in the meanwhile, kept up a fire, but she was boarded and her men also sought safety in the water. Few that were overtaken in the water were spared, and all that succeeded in getting on shore were captured, so that out of 75 or 80 men, which composed the crews of the pirate vessels, not a single one escaped, and the greater part were sent to eternity in less than half an hour, a fit ending for such wretches. The captives were turned over to the local authorities, to be punished according to Spanish law, and it is probable they soon regained their freedom, and continued their old mode of life.

The captain of these pirates, Diablito, had not long before stolen or captured this schooner from the Spaniards, and mounted on her one long nine pounder and three sixes, a formidable battery for a vessel of her class. Had she not been taken, she would have done incalculable mis-

chief, but this was her first cruize, and she never had an opportunity to make a capture. Señor Diablito, refusing to surrender, was killed in the water, and thus terminated the career of one of the most notorious and dangerous pirates that infested those seas. This gallant affair (where a victory was gained against such overwhelming odds), was the more remarkable, as not a single one of our men was even wounded.

The Catalina was about the last of the pirate vessels of any note that was heard of. Our forces had been so active, that their occupation was pretty much gone. What few pirates still hung around the coast, contented themselves with small plunder, watching for some merchant vessel that might get becalmed near the shore. Excluded from the ocean, they transferred their operations to the land; large bodies of pirates, well mounted, and armed, set to work plundering the inhabitants of Cuba principally in the neighborhood of Matanzas. The Spanish government was now *obliged* to take some action, and bodies of troops were sent to scour the country. It was evident that if the pirates were hemmed in much longer, by Commodere Porter's forces, that the Spaniards would, in self defense, be forced to exterminate them. This was the only way in which the Spanish authorities could be made to act. They were too indolent to take any part in putting down piracy, until it came directly home to them, caring little or nothing about it, so long as it only affected foreigners.

About the time that the pirates seemed to have deserted the ocean, yellow fever broke out in an alarming degree at Key West. Among the many valuable lives that were lost, was that of Lieut. Watson, the conqueror of Diablito. The Commodore was himself attacked by the disease, and for many days his life was despaired of. The vessels of the squadron were obliged to go to Key West to refit and obtain supplies, and although they were hurried off with all dispatch, the fever broke out on board and they were obliged to return to port; still a sufficient force was kept cruising to overawe the pirates, and prevent their resuming their former sway.

So far, the Spanish authorities had given every mani-

festation of their *desire* that piracy should be put down, although they had taken no trouble to *help* in the good work, though the captain general of Cuba (Vives), in response to the requests and representations of Commodore Porter, had issued orders to all under his command, to afford the Commodore every facility to enable him to carry out his instructions.

Mr. Thompson had been succeeded in the office of secretary of the navy, on the 9th of December, 1823, by Samuel L. Southard of New Jersey. During Mr. Thompson's term of office, Commodore Porter's conduct met with his warm approbation, and the secretary did all in his power to enable him to carry out his plans, so far as the appropriations of congress would allow.

As soon as the Commodore learned of the yellow fever having broken out at Key West, he repaired at once to that place, at the same instant dispatching the following communication to the secretary of the navy.

Sea Gull, Matanzas, May 28, 1824.

Sir: I regret to be under the necessity of informing you, that the fever has made its appearance on the island, and that the inability of the acting surgeon's mate, in charge of the Medical Department there, to attend to his duty from sickness, renders his return to the north necessary. I have sent another to take his place, but this leaves us deplorably off for medical men.

I propose moving the principal part of the forces north, about the middle of next month, as the only means of guarding against the consequence of a deficiency of surgeons.

I have the honor &c.,

D. PORTER.

On his arrival at Key West, Commodore Porter was attacked by the yellow fever, from which he narrowly escaped with his life, and as soon as he began to convalesce (being entirely helpless and unfit for duty), the medical officers recommended him to proceed north, and accordingly, after making what he considered a judicious disposition of his forces, he left the squadron under the command of the next senior officer, and on the 15th of June, 1824, departed in the steam galliot Sea Gull. Lieut. Legaré sailed in the schooner Wild Cat with the dispatch of May 28th (we have quoted), on the 29th of May, but the Sea

Gull reached Washington before her, so that the secretary of the navy did not receive the letter of May 28th, until June 24th after the arrival of Commodore Porter had been announced. Mr. Southard had been but five months in office, and having never before had anything to do with naval affairs, it was impossible that he should be familiar with them in so short a space of time; and although an able statesman he had not so high a sense of the consideration due to an officer of rank as some of his predecessors. This will appear in the sequel.

On reaching the capital, Commodore Porter made the following report to the secretary.

Washington, June 25, 1824.

Sir: I have the honor to inform you, that I arrived here yesterday, in the Sea Gull, from the coast of Cuba in nine days, and shall be prepared to return to the West Indies so soon as the season will render it safe to do so, and my health, which requires a respite from the effects of a tropical climate, will admit. My former communications have apprised you of my intention of removing most of the vessels under my command to the north, during the unhealthy season. Orders have been given by me on the subject, and every arrangement made to give as much protection to our commerce as the force remaining on the station will admit of. I had purposed sailing from New York and visiting, on my way out, as heretofore, the Windward islands, so soon as I can get a sufficient force together, and leaving a small detachment in the neighborhood of St. Thomas, for the protection of our commerce there, where it was asked for by our merchants, when I last visited that place.

The John Adams, it is probable, will require breaking out on her return, which will be in a week or two, which will leave me with only one sloop of war.

As the health of Capt. Wilkinson requires his return, I have left Lieut. Oellers in command at Thompson's island, with full instructions as to the duties to be performed there, and I have also left all necessary orders for the commanders as circumstances may arise there during my absence.

The island promises to be healthy this winter. I have left about sixty officers and men there, but I am sorry to say I have only a surgeon's mate to leave to attend them during the sickly season. I have, during this season, greatly improved the comfort and condition of the island, and thereby lessened that repugnance to remaining there which formerly existed, both among the officers and men. I shall proceed to New York in a few days to hasten the dispatch of

the stores for the squadron and the island, which are now preparing there; and which are much required. If there are any instructions from the Department affecting my various duties I shall be happy to be furnished with them as soon as possible.

I have the honor &c.,

D. PORTER.

Honorable Secretary of the Navy.

By reference to various letters written by Commodore Porter about this time, it will appear that he was urging the department to send him medical officers, stores, and equipments, to enable him to do what was required; and it will be seen by the above letter that he could only leave a surgeon's mate at Key West, and the stores and provisions, though promised, had not reached Key West when he left. The crews of the Shark, Grampus, and Spark, had been much reduced by fever; and as the vessels were not in condition for service the Commodore had ordered them nórth.

Although the department had been fully apprised of the sickly condition of the squadron, no steps had been taken to render aid by fitting out other vessels, which omission we must attribute to a want of knowledge (on the part of Mr. Southard), of the naval necessities.

It must be observed, that no fault had been found with Commodore Porter for his return home. Considering Norfolk within the limits of his command he thought that he could, for a short time, conduct the operations of his squadron from that point, just as well as from any other, Key West being 240 miles nearer Norfolk than to Porto Rico on a direct line, and 660 miles nearer if he had to go around Cape Antonia, as was the custom before the days of steam.

Commodore Porter had no sooner arrived in Washington, than several piracies took place under circumstances that could not have been prevented had he been present, and the secretary of the navy received a number of communications, stating that more protection to our commerce was required. Mr. Secretary Southard, thereupon, drew the Commodore's attention to these complaints, which seemed to ignore the fact, that he was doing his utmost to get the vessels, under his command, back to their

stations. He had sent three schooners to Tampico, in answer to applications from merchants at that point, and it was quite evident to him that the honorable secretary did not comprehend the difficulties of the situation, possibly thinking, that when a vessel was wanted at a particular place she must proceed at once, regardless of wind or weather. In short, he had about as much idea what preparations were required, under certain circumstances, as any other civilian just inducted into the department would have had. To relieve the government, and the *party* of any odium, it was found convenient to throw the censure for any short comings upon the navy.

The blame for these piracies lay, principally, in the parsimonious conduct of the merchants (who should have furnished their vessels with a swivel and a few muskets), and the want of courage in the captains. To show that this was the case, we will mention an instance where one vessel was boarded by a boat containing seven men, who put the entire crew below after beating them, and then plundered the ship, and fled to the shore without opposition.

To hold Commodore Porter responsible for all these depredations, must have been about as reasonable as to hold the New York chief of police responsible for all the river thieves in that quarter. The Commodore quietly disposes of the charges of the West India merchant, who stated that there were no naval vessels at all on the north side of Cuba, in the following letter to the secretary:

"I have taken the liberty of enclosing to you, reports from Lieut. McIntoch, the commandant of Thompson's island, by which you will perceive that every vigilance has been exercised by him in endeavoring to recapture the vessels taken, and to punish the offenders; that at the very time Wm. Norris states that no United States vessels were on the north side of Cuba, the Terrier, Lieut. Paine, and the Diablito were cruising there, and I have also to state that the Ferret, Lieut. Farragut, was on that coast, and had been daily (until a few days previous) employed in giving convoy in and out of the harbor, sometimes with his vessel, sometimes with his boats. I have further to state, that the corvette John Adams, brig Spark, schooner Grampus, the Jackall, Weasel, and the Beagle have a short time since the receipt of Mr. Norris' letter, all visited the coasts of Cuba, zealously employed in the protection of our commerce, in the performance

of which duty I regret to say that Lieuts. Montgomery and Cumming and several others have died. * * * * * * * There is, at this time, on the Coast of Cuba and on their way there, the ships Hornet and Decoy, the schooners Shark, Wild Cat, and Terrier, and six barges, and in a short time the force will be augmented by the departure of others of the schooners, large and small. The charge then, or intimation in any shape, of neglect (on the part of myself or officers), to the interest of the merchants, who have no feeling but for their own pecuniary concerns, is as you perceive unfounded."

Notwithstanding Secretary Southard's complaining letters, when he knew, or should have known, that Commodore Porter was making every exertion to fit out, and despatch his vessels, he made a report to the president Dec. 1, 1824, of which we give an extract:

"The manner in which the force assigned to the protection of our commerce, and the suppression of piracy in the West Indies, has been employed will be seen by the annexed letters and reports of Commodore Porter marked "C." The activity, zeal and enterprise of our officers have continued to command approbation. *All* the *vessels* have been kept uniformly and busily employed where the danger was believed to be *greatest*, except for *short periods* when the *commander* supposed it *necessary* that they should return to the United States to receive provisions, repairs and men, and for other objects *essential* to *their health*, *comfort* and *efficiency*. No complaints have reached this department of injury from privateers at Porto Rico, or other Spanish possessions, nor have our cruisers found any violating our rights. A few small piratical vessels and boats have been taken, and establishments broken up, and much salutary protection afforded to our commerce. The force employed has, however, been too small constantly to watch every part of a coast so extensive as that of the islands and shores of the Gulf of Mexico, and some piratical depredations have, therefore, been committed; but they are of a character, though, perhaps, not less bloody and fatal to the sufferers, yet differing widely from those which first excited the sympathy of the public, and exertions of the government."

Up to the time of his return to the West Indies, Commodore Porter had every reason to believe that the government was entirely satisfied with his visit to Washington. He had been kindly received by the president, who had accepted his explanations, and no objection

had been made by the department at his not immediately going back to the West Indies, well knowing that he could manage his fleet better from Washington than from some distant portions of the West Indies. Com. Porter was constantly receiving from his officers, reports of operations of the vessels, and the progress of repairs and other preparations necessary to put the squadron in an efficient condition, and he was constantly employed in directing those preparations. In short he was unremittingly engaged in the active duties of his command, except for a short period when he visited the springs for his health. From letters, still extant, it appears that the government was entirely satisfied with the Commodore's continuing to exercise in *Washington* his command, in all its departments, that all complaints of piracy and other interruptions to our commerce were communicated to him by the department for his action, with a view to his dispatching the necessary orders to his subordinates, and not with an idea that he should proceed in person to carry them out. His return to the United States, and the reasons for it were communicated officially to congress with approbation. Such were the facts bearing on circumstances that occurred prior to his joining his command again in the West Indies.

On the 14th October, 1824, Secretary Southard writes to the Commodore as follows:

"*Sir:* It is deemed expedient by the Executive, that you proceed as speedily as possible to your station, in the John Adams, that by your presence there the most efficient protection may be afforded to our commerce, and you may be able to meet any contingencies that may occur. The Constellation will be fitted for sea, and sent to you as speedily as possible.

I enclose, by order of the President, an extract from a letter lately received from the island of Cuba. You will consider it confidential, and to be used for your information, so far as you may find it useful. With the Constellation, directions will be sent for you to proceed to the island of Hayti, there to accomplish certain objects, which will be particularly explained to you, and instructions given."

In obedience to these orders, Commodore Porter sailed for Key West, having, while at the north, succeeded in getting his squadron completely fitted out, and made suitable arrangements at Key West in case of future attacks

of yellow fever; for the vessels having originally been prepared in a great hurry, were deficient in many things absolutely necessary.

While Secretary Thompson was in office, he wrote a letter to Commodore Porter under date of August 19, 1823, from which, as it has an important bearing on circumstances before referred to, we extract the following:

"In the last paragraph of your letter dated the first instant, transmitted by the U. S. schooner Ferrett, you mention that circumstances will towards the fall render your return to the United States for a short time necessary.

"You will please to avail yourself of the time most suitable for this purpose and return to the United States in the manner most convenient to yourself and least prejudicial to the interests of the service."

To obtain a true understanding of the facts, connected with Commodore Porter's career, it has been necessary to insert the foregoing portions of official correspondence, which, though uninteresting to the general reader, tend to show the animus which dictated the proceedings against him on his next return to the United States.

He had no sooner arrived in the West Indies, than owing to the ill advised proceedings of one of his officers, Com. Porter found himself involved in complications with the Spanish authorities.

It appears that on the morning of the 26th of October, Lieut. Charles T. Platt, commanding the schooner Beagle, was notified that the store of the American consul at St. Thomas had been broken open the preceding night, and robbed of goods to the amount of $5,000. The consul requested Lieut. Platt to pursue the robbers, who, it was believed, had proceeded in a boat to Foxardo, in the island of Porto Rico, and Lieut. Platt immediately got under way for that place, capturing on the way a piratical sloop that was supposed by him to have had some connection with the robbery. The crew of this vessel had abandoned her, when they found it impossible otherwise to escape, and Lieut. Platt not finding the goods stood into the harbor of Foxardo. Next morning, Oct. 27th, an invitation was sent from the commandant, for Lieut. Platt to visit him, and that officer accordingly landed with Lieut. Ritchie, the pilot, and the consul's clerk, who went to identify the

stolen property. Lieut. Platt states in his report, that for better success, the party had put on citizen's clothes, which was a grave error, as no officer is called upon to undertake duty of the kind, where, by appearing out of uniform, he will lay himself open to suspicion. When Lieut. Platt reached the shore, the *register* of his vessel was demanded, when he explained the object of his visit, and the reason of his not wearing uniform, but without avail, as he was not allowed to proceed to the town. Thinking however, that the person who detained him was acting without authority, Lieut. Platt went to Foxardo and satisfactorily explained the object of his visit to the captain of the port. He then waited on the alcalde, who after further explanations, proffered Lieut. Platt his assistance. Having made a few inquiries in some of the stores, which had a tendency to bring to light any one who might have been engaged in the traffic of stolen goods, Lieut. Platt received a peremptory order to repair to the house of the alcalde, where he was received by the captain of the port, who denounced him as a pirate, demanding his papers. Lieut. Platt, to satisfy these people that his account of himself was correct, produced his commission, which they declared to be a forgery, and remanded him and his companions to prison, saying they would retain them until they could hear from St. Johns. Lieut Platt then demanded to know what further was required, and was informed that he must produce his appointment to command the vessel, which he finally did. A council of public officers and citizens was then called, and after such a deliberation as one would suppose a party of that kind would hold, Lieut. Platt and his companions were released, and permitted to rejoin their vessel after having had heaped upon them the most outrageous abuse. There was nothing in Lieut. Platt's conduct to justify such treatment, which was merely to enable these people to get the goods out of the way and avoid discovery. This same alcalde had not long before received positive orders from Don Miguel de la Torres, governor of Porto Rico, to give every aid to the Americans, in ferreting out pirates, promising that those who should distinguish themselves "should be reported to his majesty the king of Spain, giving to each one justice according to his merits."

As soon as the report of this outrage reached Commodore Porter, he was naturally very indignant; and satisfied that the treatment of his officers was a pretext to conceal the connection of the people of Foxardo with the theft from the consul's store, he considered them no better than pirates. His officers had, on other occasions, been treated with indignity, and this last outrage was more than he could bear. Mr. Southard also had covertly found fault with him and his officers, for not putting a stop to these nefarious transactions, and public opinion at home, in view of all the inconveniences to which American commerce had been subjected, seemed to incline to prompt measures against the Spaniards, in vindication of American rights. From the commencement of the South American revolutions, the Spaniards had oppressed our commerce with illegal blockades, to which the United States government had tamely submitted, and Commodore Porter thought that a good opportunity had now arrived, to show the Spaniards that their arbitrary proceedings would no longer be tolerated. The instructions which he had received from Secretary Thompson, not only justified prompt measures, but pointed out to him the way in which they should be taken.

"In the case of belligerents, where the army of one party enters the country of a neutral power, the army of the other has a right to follow it there. In the case of *pirates*, the right of the armed force of one power to follow them into the territory of another is more complete. In regard to pirates, there is *no neutral party;* they being the enemies of the human race, all nations are parties against them and may be considered as allies" As a further justification, Commodore Porter had received information from Mr. Cabot, our consul at St. Thomas, that John Campus, a man of wealth and consequence in Foxardo, was the actual receiver of the stolen goods, and that he and the alcalde were accessory to all the villainy that had been committed in St. Thomas.

The Commodore having made up his mind what to do, proceeded to Passage island, with the John Adams, Grampus and Beagle. Thence, with the two schooners and the boats of the John Adams, with Captain Dallas and part of

his officers, seamen and marines, he repaired to Foxardo. On entering the port, he found his visit had been anticipated, and that the batteries were manned to fire on him, and accordingly he sent a party of seamen and marines on shore, who spiked the guns, the Spaniards having fled at their approach.

Com. Porter then landed in person, and advanced upon the town, spiking on the way a small battery placed for the defense of a pass in the road, and reached Foxardo in about thirty minutes. He found the Spaniards drawn up outside of the town, and advancing his men to within pistol shot, the Commodore sent forward a flag of truce, requiring the alcalde, captain of the port and other principal offenders, to come forward and make atonement for the outrages they had heaped upon an American officer, and giving them one hour to deliberate. The offenders accordingly appeared, and begged pardon of Lieut. Platt in the presence of all the officers and men, and promised to respect all American officers who might thereafter visit them. The Commodore then returned to his vessels and left the harbor, after a stay of only three hours. As the vessels were getting under way several persons appeared on the beach, under a white flag, having with them some bullocks and a number of horses, the latter apparently laden with presents from the authorities, which were not waited for.

In answer to his report of this affair, dated Nov. 15, 1824, and forwarded to the department as soon as circumstances would admit, Commodore Porter received the following:

Navy Department, 27th December, 1824.

Sir: Your letter, of the 15th of November last, relating to the extraordinary transactions at Foxardo, in the island of Porto Rico, on the —— day of that month, has been received and considered.

It is not intended, at this time, to pronounce an opinion on the propriety of those transactions, on your part, but their importance demands for them a full investigation, and you will proceed without unnecessary delay to this place, to furnish such explanations as may be required, of every thing connected with their cause, origin, progress, and termination. For that purpose, you will bring with you those officers whose testimony is necessary, particularly Lieut. Platt, and such written evidence as you may suppose useful.

You will return in such convenient vessel as may be best spared from the squadron, and on your leaving the station, you will deliver

the command to Captain Warrington, with all such papers, instructions and information as will enable him in the most effectual manner to accomplish all the objects for which the vessels now under your command were placed there.

I am very respectfully,

Commodore David Porter, SAMUEL L. SOUTHARD.
Commanding U. S. Naval Forces,
W. Indies, Gulf of Mexico, &c.

This letter was worthy of an ordinary person suddenly elevated to high position, and invested with authority which he did not know how to use, but was unworthy of a gentleman of the talents and reputation of Mr. Southard. It showed that there was something behind the scenes, and that the honorable secretary had jumped to conclusions, without taking time to examine the record. He certainly was ignorant of the instructions given Commodore Porter by his predecessor, Mr. Thompson, or he would have extended more courtesy to a gallant and distinguished officer; for, although an officer cannot claim exemption from responsibility on the ground of former services, there was a certain propriety to be observed, in dealing with one who, from his youth up, had devoted himself to the service of his country, and in the late war performed services equalled by few, and had done more damage to the commerce of the enemy than all the rest of the navy combined. An officer whose career had been so brilliant, that thousands of his countrymen had testified their enthusiastic approbation, in a manner seldom witnessed — who had held a position in the administration of the navy, only second to that of the secretary himself, and brought it from chaos into real shape and permanent existence. His brilliant achievements even drew forth the admiration of his enemies, and the celebrated William Cobbett wrote to him, "wishing him success in giving power to freedom, to struggle against and overcome despotism," and though Cobbett was an enemy to oppression, he was an Englishman and loved his country.

We must consider the secretary's conduct, as a piece of irascibility, wholly unwarranted, and an exercise of arbitrary power towards a distinguished officer, which could

only proceed from one, who at the time, knew nothing of the courtesies due to members of the naval service.

It must be borne in mind, that for many previous aggressions on the part of the Spanish authorities, our government could obtain no redress, and the president in his message to congress on the 2d December, 1823, had made use of the following language:

"Although our expedition has almost entirely destroyed the unlicensed pirates from the island of Cuba, the success of our exertions has not been equally effectual to suppress the same crime, under other pretenses and colors in the neighboring island of Porto Rico. They have been committed there, under the abusive use of Spanish commissions. At an early period of the present year, remonstrances were made to the governor of that island, by an agent who was sent for the purpose, against their outrages on the peaceful commerce of the United States, of which many have occurred. That officer, professing his own want of authority to make satisfaction for our just complaints, answered only by a reference of them to the government of Spain. The minister of the United States, to that Court, was specially instructed to urge the necessity of that government directing restitution, and indemnity for wrongs already committed, and interdicting the repetition of them. The minister, as has been seen, was debarred access to the Spanish government, and in the meantime several new cases of flagrant outrage have occurred, and citizens of the United States in the island of Porto Rico have suffered, and others have been threatened with assassination, for asserting their unquestionable rights, even before the lawful tribunals of the country."

What other course ought a country to pursue under such circumstances but to make instant war? It remains to this day, a blot on our escutcheon, that our government acted with such indecision and feebleness, when the Spanish heel was grinding our citizens into the dust, yet showed such promptness in degrading a gallant officer, for resenting on the spot, a gross insult to our flag. A hundred arguments might be brought forward to prove the inconsistency of the administration, in their conduct of this affair, but our limits will only permit a few extracts of correspondence, to give a general idea of matters and things; and these proceedings will exhibit the animus of those who commenced the persecution of the Commodore for upholding the honor of his country.

On his arrival in the United States, Commodore Porter reported himself to the secretary of the navy, as follows:

Washington, March 1st, 1825.

Sir: I have the honor to inform you, that in obedience to your orders, I have come to this place, and I now await your further orders.

With the greatest respect,

Your obt. servt.,

D. PORTER.

The Commodore also wrote to the secretary, in reference to certain charges brought against himself and officers, by Messrs. Randall and Mountain, two American merchants, and requesting an investigation, to which no attention was paid. Finally, his patience becoming exhausted at the dilatory action of the secretary (after such hot haste in ordering him home), he wrote again to the department, as follows:

Washington, March 16, 1825.

Sir: It is now sixteen days since I had the honor to report to you my arrival here, in obedience to your order of the 27th of December, and I have anxiously since, waited your further instructions.

I am aware, Sir, of the interruption the recent changes in government have occasioned to the transaction of public business, and however awkward and uncertain may be my present situation, and whatever anxiety I may feel on the occasion, it is not my wish to press on the department my own affairs, in preference to those of greater importance. I cannot however, help requesting, there may be as little delay in the investigation of my conduct, both as regards the affair of Foxardo, and the statement of Mr. Randall and Mr. Mountain, as is consistent with the public interest; the state of ignorance and uncertainty in which I have been kept as to the intentions of the government, and the desire of vindicating myself to the government and the public, and relieving myself from a species of suspension, and supposed condemnation, must be my apology for now troubling you.

Officers continue to make their reports, and to request of me orders, not knowing whether the department still considers me in command of the West India squadron, I have been at a loss to know how to act, will you please instruct me?

I have the honor &c.,

Honorable Samuel L. Southard. D. PORTER.

This brought a curt reply from the department, which may have been the official style of fifty years ago, in addressing an honored servant of the republic, after summoning him in great haste to give explanations, and then keeping him for more than a fortnight without taking notice of him, but it certainly was not diplomatic courtesy; and if we judge individuals by their written style, the then secretary of the navy would have been found wanting in some of the essentials for that high office, which presides over a body of men distinguished for their courtesy and mental culture, and who can never be made to comprehend how so little attention can be paid to their rights, as to place their destinies in the hands of one who has no feeling in common with them.

Navy Department, March 16, 1825.

Sir: It has become my duty to apprise you of the determination of the Executive, that a Court of Inquiry be formed, as soon as circumstances will permit, to examine into the occurrence at Foxardo, which was the occasion of your recall, and also to comply with the request contained in your letter of the 2d inst. It was the intention of the Department, in ordering Captain Warrington to the West Indies, to relieve you from the command of the squadron there.

I am respectfully Yours,

SAMUEL L. SOUTHARD.

Commodore David Porter, U. S. N.

Comment on such a letter is unnecessary. It confirms the opinion, that an opportunity was seized to recall the Commodore; and to justify himself before the country, the secretary was obliged to try him, trusting to circumstances to make out a case against him.

In the synopsis of the voluminous trial, which is all that we can find space to give, the reader will, we think, be convinced that Commodore Porter, at Foxardo, acted strictly according to his instructions.

ANECDOTES OF THE CRUISE.

The Commodore, by permission of the secretary of the navy, took his family with him to the West Indies, on his second visit in the John Adams, although his principles were averse to having women on shipboard, on account of the trouble they caused. The pretty chambermaids in particular became involved in all sorts of difficulties with the officers, the highest of whom were not proof against their attractions.

At Jamaica, the Commodore was invited to stay with his family on shore, at the house of the governor, but had to leave the servants on shipboard they not being expected. During the ten days the Commodore and family were on shore, the fair damsels held receptions in the cabin, and the officers, to while away the time, visited them there. Among others Commander F———, the flag captain, who was a privileged character, used to spend a good deal of time in the cabin, and one day in attempting to kiss one of the young women, she broke a valuable flute over his head and left the pieces lying on the cabin floor. On his return to the ship, the Commodore saw the fragments of the flute, and asked the girls how it got broken. "I did it, sir, said one, and ye should take your fleet captain on shore with ye, and not leave him behind to be kissing us girls, an ill mannered man as he is." The Commodore saw how the matter stood, and spoke to Captain Dallas about it, saying "that he thought F——— might have paid a little more respect to his cabin," and added "I wish you would give him a hint to that effect."

F—— was a vain, elegant looking man, and was furious when he received the Commodore's message, and, putting on his cap, marched on deck where the latter was standing, and passed him without the customary salute, at the same time looking very sulky and disrespectful. Just then Captain Dallas approached the Commodore, and commented on F———'s behavior. "Tell him," said the Commodore, "that if he does not immediately apologize, I will court martial him for disrespect. In the meantime he will consider himself suspended." F——— finally con-

cluded to apologize, and called on the Commodore in his cabin, making the *amende* as if he did it rather from necessity than choice. "All right F ———," said the Commodore, "say no more about it. I didn't mind your kissing the girl, so much as having reports spread, which affect the reputation of my chief of staff. The girl says, you use cheap pomatum and wear ragged handkerchiefs, and are not half so agreeable as the midshipman aid, who parts his hair in the middle. The girls have nicknamed you Bullfinch." F ——— never forgave this sally, although from motives of self interest, he continued on the Commodore's staff for the rest of the cruise.

On board the John Adams was an old boatswain's mate named Reuben James, who had saved Decatur's life at Tripoli, and who would occasionally get very drunk, in which condition he was insubordinate. Captain Dallas became tired of the old sailor's pranks, and determined to punish him; and one day, after the boatswain's mate had indulged in a frolic, all hands were called to witness punishment. Captain Dallas, addressing the culprit, said: "Reuben James, you are a troublesome old rascal, always getting drunk, and I am going to make an example of you. You are herewith disrated from the position of first boatswain's mate to that of seaman." "Thank you, sir," said Reuben, "for your high opinion, but if your honor pleases, I was only celebrating the day when I saved Captain Decatur's life, and I will promise not to get drunk again, except when I go on liberty." "Who will go your security, sir," said the captain. Commodore Porter, who was walking the quarter deck, and had overheard the conversation, stepped forward to the mast and said: "I will go his security, Dallas, a man who saved Decatur's life is entitled to get drunk occasionally." So Reuben escaped punishment, and in the outburst of his gratitude, assured the Commodore that he would do as much for him if the opportunity ever offered!

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE court of inquiry, in the case of Commodore Porter, was ordered on the 19th of April, 1825. The warrant issued, was directed to Isaac Chauncey Esquire, captain in the navy, president; Captains W. M. Crane, and G. C. Read, members; and R. C. Coxe, judge advocate.

On the 2d of May, the court met at the Washington navy yard, when Commodore Porter interposed some exceptions to the formation of it, and to the terms of the warrant under which it was constituted; to the former, as being composed of a *majority of officers junior to himself*, and to the latter as not embracing the specific subject of inquiry which he had requested to be investigated, for the vindication of his officers and himself, as indicated in his letter of the 2d of March, and which the secretary was understood to have promised.

In the course of discussion of these subjects, the court took exception to some written expression addressed to them by Commodore Porter, and in order to guard against a repetition of what they considered an offense, they issued an order that all future communications from the Commodore should pass the inspection of the judge advocate, before being submitted to the court. The Commodore explained, and disavowed in the most unequivocal and satisfactory manner, as he conceived, the construction put upon the excepted passage of his address, but the interdict of direct intercourse between him and them was not withdrawn, for which reason he quitted the court, and during the remainder of the inquiry had no further concern in it. He was, nevertheless, allowed to have an *incomplete* copy of the proceedings, but when he applied to the judge advocate for a *true copy*, he was told that the investigation being then completed and sent to the secretary, it was not proper to furnish it!

The investigation was completed on the 9th of May, 1825, on which day the final report was transmitted to Mr. Southard, Commodore Porter having offered neither evidence, explanation nor defense. Nothing further was heard on the subject, until the secretary's letter of the 28th of May, announcing the president's determination to order a court martial.

In the meantime the newspapers had not been idle in discussing this matter, and imputations, from administration journals, were cast unsparingly upon Commodore Porter's conduct, until the latter, suffering from a sense of injury, addressed a statement to the president justifying his conduct. This publication consisted of a voluminous mass of documents, with a defense of his conduct in the Foxardo affair, with the proceedings of the court of inquiry, and such remarks thereon as he felt justified in making; maintaining, throughout the publication, an entirely respectful attitude to all concerned.

For want of space, we must content ourselves with giving the first and concluding parts of the pamphlet which was dedicated to President John Quincy Adams.

DEFENSE.

Having been displaced from my command by order of the secretary of the navy, to furnish such explanations as may be required of every thing connected with the cause, origin, progress, and termination of my transactions at Foxardo, I must refer to the letters of Lieut. Platt, Mr. Cabot, and Mr. Bergerest, to my letter to the governor of Foxardo, and to my official report to the secretary of the navy, for the progress and termination of this affair, and to the following explanations:

I rest my justification on the laws of nations and of nature, highly approved precedents, and the orders of the secretary of the navy.

I might stop here, with a perfect confidence of acquittal, from the charge of rashness and indiscretion in the violation of the territorial jurisdiction and immunities of Spain, or of any disposition to offer to that government any indignity or insult; but, without asking of me explanations, and without complaint from Spain or any other quarter, it has been thought proper to anticipate even the resolution and wishes of Mr. Archer (already distinguished for his active hostility to me in the trial of Lieut. Kennon). I have been ordered from my station to explain the transactions at Foxardo, which it has pleased the secretary of the navy to term extraordinary.

As I am placed before the world as a condemned and degraded officer, it is a duty I owe to myself, as well as the service to which I belong, and it may be useful to others to know, that in all this transaction, I was acting in as strict conformity with the letter and spirit of my instructions, as the nature of the case would admit — that it was provided for, as near as could be imagined, by the government, and that I have, in no instance, departed from my instructions, so far as I could, by repeated examinations, understand them. I have perceived no obscurity in them, and complain of none. I believe I understand them, and the intentions of those who drew them up, and without national or natural law or precedent, I feel a confidence that the responsibility rests with those who framed them.

I do not wish it understood, that I dispute the propriety of the orders, on the contrary I fully concur in the doctrine laid down in them, they are framed on the laws of nations, were drawn up by one well versed in them, and were intended to supply a want of knowledge of international law on my part.

I not only subscribed to that part which authorizes my landing, and pursuing pirates in the limits of a foreign power, and denounces those nations "so lost to a sense of respect for their own character and interest and the respect of others, as to refuse to put down piracy, much less to afford them any asylum and protection," but I subscribe to the yet stronger measures which have been recently recommended by the executive, to wit, "nothing short of authority to land, pursue them, and hold the authorities of places answerable for the pirates who issue from and resort there" "to make them answerable by reprisals on the property of inhabitants, and to blockade the ports of the islands." Nothing short of these measures can put down the disgraceful system.

I also coincide with the president "that neither the government of Spain nor the governments of either of the islands (Cuba and Porto Rico) can reasonably complain of either of these measures, or all of them, should they be resorted to, or the United States interpose their aid for the accomplishment of an object which is of equal importance to Spain and her islands as well as to us." To the contrary it should be expected that they will faithfully coöperate in such measure as may be necessary for the accomplishment of this very object. Whatever measures, however, may be resorted to by the United States, the first thing necessary to secure success is to *protect*, *countenance* and *support* the officer designated to execute them; and in any measures which he may adopt, requiring energy of action, he ought not to be discouraged, and degraded by punishment before complaint, or removed from his command without being allowed the opportunity to explain the reasons for his conduct. With-

out such assurance no officer in his senses would willingly undertake the delicate duties which I have been performing, and if compelled to would, from his apprehensions of sharing my fate, scarcely meet the expectations of the government and people of the United States.

The discouraging circumstance of my removal, for the offense of landing on Porto Rico and punishing the accessories of pirates (the authorities of Foxardo), may have a much more important effect in retarding the suppression of piracy, than is at present apprehended; so long as the governors and people of the small towns of Porto Rico and Cuba are satisfied that they may imprison us with impunity, and that punishment certainly follows any attempt on our part to obtain redress and security to our persons, so long the suppression of piracy is impossible, and he, who, on these terms, is willing to undertake it, loses sight of his own respectability, and of the respectability of his nation and flag.

If I have failed in justifying myself, I trust that the failure may be ascribed to the peculiarly delicate duties which have been confided to me, involving nice and intricate questions of national rights, and a zealous desire to act fully up to the wishes of the government, not from a wish to act in opposition to its views, or to infringe on the territorial rights and immunities of others.

Should there appear the slightest evidence of my having, for a moment, wilfully disregarded what was due to my country, and the respect due the government of Spain, I shall submit, with resignation and cheerfulness, to the severest punishment that can be inflicted on me, if it extends to depriving me of my commission, which I should then be unworthy of bearing.

There was nothing in this pamphlet to which exception should have been taken. It is written in a manly tone, in which every American has a right to express his feelings, for if this right be denied to any citizen, what is our government but a despotism, where a few arbitrary men in office may, in the name of the people, inflict what punishment they please for any imaginary offense.

About this time an anonymous communication appeared in the *National Intelligencer*, which was traced to the secretary of the navy, and this induced Commodore Porter to publish some letters bearing on his case, which gave offense at head quarters, particularly as the opposition press, ever ready to assail the administration, took the matter up and strongly advocated the Commodore's cause. In fact the affair was made a political question, and every

effort put forth in order that the Commodore might commit himself, for so popular a man could not be brought to trial without exciting discussion and comment unfavorable to the administration. Several of the Commodore's friends called on President Adams to see if justice could not be done him, but the president, influenced by the secretary of the navy, would take no steps to further a peaceful solution of the question.

Lafayette was just then on his visit to the United States as the guest of the nation, and becoming acquainted with Commodore Porter, and sympathizing with his cause, he took the liberty of asking of the president, as a personal favor, that the latter would receive the Commodore, and permit him to make personal explanations, which request the president could not refuse to grant so honored a person. It was accordingly arranged, that Lafayette and the Commodore should call at the White House at twelve the next day; but, when they alighted at the door of the executive mansion, where the president was apparently waiting to receive them, Mr. Adams stepped forward, and shook hands cordially with the marquis, took his arm and left the Commodore standing under the front portico, without taking any notice of him whatever. This gratuitous insult, to both Lafayette and Commodore Porter, was not explained nor was the matter referred to while the interview lasted. It would seem as if the president wished to teach the Commodore a lesson in diplomacy, or intimate to the nation's guest, that he must not meddle with what did not concern him. Whatever was the motive, Lafayette made a short visit on that occasion, and the result of his attempt to bring about a pleasant meeting between the head of the government and a distinguished naval officer, did not estrange him, in the least, from the latter, but on the contrary, deepened his feelings of esteem for one, whom he saw had been very unjustly treated. This affair showed a foregone conclusion to injure Commodore Porter, and he was shortly afterward notified that he would be tried by court martial, which satisfied the public of the inimical feeling towards him, if they entertained any doubts on the subject.

The court accordingly convened on the 7th July, 1825, at the Washington Navy Yard. It was composed of the

following officers: Captain James Barron, president, Captain Thomas Tingey, Captain James Biddle, Captain Charles Ridgely, Captain Robert T. Spence, Captain John Downes, Captain John D. Henley, Captain Jesse D. Elliot, Captain James Renshaw, Captain Thomas Brown, Captain Charles C. Thompson, Captain Alexander S. Wadsworth, Captain George W. Rodgers, Richard S. Coxe, judge advocate.

Had such been the secretary's intention, he could not have appointed a court more inimical to Commodore Porter. The president was his known enemy, and had been ever since the Commodore was a member of the court that had sentenced him to six years suspension, for his conduct in the affair of the Chesapeake. Barron had sent one brave spirit to his long home for this offense, and was now to have the pleasure of inflicting a wound on one, who was Decatur's peer in all that was brave and loyal; for even to the last of his life, Barron maintained his animosity against those who had condemned his conduct.

Then there was Elliot, whose proceedings at Lake Erie had been arraigned before the public, openly charged with misconduct, and disobedience of orders by his commanding officer on that occasion — a series of investigations by court martial, and inquiry, and a flood of pamphlets had brought the matter prominently before the country. In discussions which ensued (particularly in naval circles), Commodore Porter had been outspoken, as was his custom; and had not hesitated to express very decided opinions, always adverse to Elliot, who owed him a grudge which he now had an opportunity to gratify. Commodore Porter never spoke to Elliot (socially), and it was well understood that they were enemies. Biddle was not friendly to Commodore Porter, but it was not supposed that his feelings would prejudice his action as a member of the court.

The judge advocate was apparently hostile to the Commodore from the very beginning, for what reason is unknown, unless from his intimacy with the secretary of the navy, which ought not to have influenced him against the accused. Commodore Porter had objected to Mr. Coxe's proceedings, as judge advocate of the court of inquiry,

and the only objection he made to the court martial was the appointment of this gentleman as judge advocate.

When asked by the president whether he had any exceptions to make, Commodore Porter addressed the court as follows:

Mr. President: Thus called upon to declare my exceptions to any of the members of this general court martial, here assembled, who are to exercise a judicative function in my case, and to have a voice in pronouncing my guilt or innocence, I do without hesitation renounce every such exception, even if it were so that any member of this court should, unknown to me, be affected by any prejudice or bias unfavorable to an impartial judgment in my case. I rely too implicitly on the known character of my brethren in arms, to think of scrutinizing the motives of any. Their own hearts are sufficiently informed, by justice and honor, of the proper course to be pursued in such a case. But, sir, I do find myself very reluctantly compelled, by a sense of justice due to myself, as well as by a regard for the honor of the service, and for the wholesome safeguards of military jurisprudence, to interpose at this precise stage of the business, some fundamental objections to so much of the material of this court as consists in the functions of judge advocate.

He then proceeded to give his objections as follows:

First, against the legal competency of the judge advocate (which he illustrated by a sound argument), and second against his moral competency, inasmuch as Mr. Coxe was evidently biased against him, and it was for the judge advocate's interest that he should be convicted.

On this point Commodore Porter remarked as follows:

I have direct and certain information, that the gentleman now claiming to officiate as judge advocate, has written and published at least one anonymous article, distinctly asserting the truth of one of the specifications now exhibited against me, and so has pledged his credit, in a way utterly incompatible with the requisite impartiality, to fix a charge on me, which from its nature may result in a question of veracity between him and me. I am further informed (though not on such direct and certain authority as in the other instance, but from sources pregnant of probability and truth), that he has employed himself in writing, and has quite or nearly ready for the press, a pamphlet professing to be a full answer to my published defense against the principal charge now to be tried, and laboring to establish by facts and reasonings the conclusion of my guilt. Of these facts, I doubt not of being able to produce the most satisfac-

tory evidence, if the voluntary and candid avowal of the gentleman himself should not dispense with it. Then I would ask, what is left for him on this occasion, but to redeem his public pledges, and to vindicate his own preconceived, divulged and fixed opinion on my guilt, and how is this to be reconciled with any of the legitimate functions of a judge advocate?

When the court was cleared for deliberation, one of the members, not considering himself competent to decide the question presented by the Commodore, without legal advice, the judge advocate was called upon for his opinion (!) which was of course adverse to the Commodore, and the court therefore refused to receive the latter's exceptions.

After this *extraordinary* proceeding the usual oaths were administered to the members and to the judge advocate, and the following charges against Commodore Porter were read.

Charge 1*st.* Disobedience of orders, and conduct unbecoming an officer.

Specification. For that he, the said David Porter, being in command of the naval forces of the United States in the West India seas, Gulf of Mexico, &c., did on or about the fourteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-four, with a part of said naval forces, land on the island of Porto Rico, in the dominions of his Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, then and still at amity and peace with the United States, in a forcible and hostile manner, and in military array and did then and there commit divers acts of hostility against the subjects and property of the said King of Spain, in contravention of the constitution of the United States and of the laws of nations and in violation of the instructions from the government of the United States to him, the said David Porter.

Charge 2*d.* Insubordinate conduct and conduct unbecoming an officer.

Specification 1*st.* For that he, the said David Porter, did write and transmit to the President of the United States, a letter of an insubordinate and disrespectful character, to wit: on the seventeenth day of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five, and did also write and transmit to the secretary of the navy, at sundry times, hereinafter particularly mentioned, various letters of an insubordinate and disrespectful character, viz., on the thirtieth day of January, the sixteenth day of March, the *thir-*

teenth day of April and the fourteenth day of June, all in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five, thereby violating the respect due from every officer in the navy to the head of the department, impairing the discipline of the service, and setting a most dangerous and pernicious example.

Specification 2*d*. For that he, the said David Porter, after a court of inquiry had been convened and directed to investigate, and make report of the facts in relation to the matters embraced in the specification of the first charge, and after such court had terminated its inquiries, and had transmitted its report to the secretary of the navy, and before the executive had published or authorized the publication of the proceedings of said court, did publish or cause to be published, a pamphlet purporting to contain the proceedings of the said court of inquiry.

Specification 3*d*. For that he, the said David Porter, in the publication made as mentioned in the last preceding specification, did give an incorrect statement of the proceedings of the said court of inquiry.

Specification 4*th*. For that he, the said David Porter, did in the publication referred to in the two last preceding specifications, insert various remarks, statements and insinuations not warranted by the facts, highly disrespectful to the secretary of the navy, and to the said court of inquiry.

Specification 5th. For that he the said David Porter, did in the same publication referred to in the last preceding specification, without any authority or permission for that purpose, make public official communications to the government, and official correspondence with the government; and has on other occasions between the 1st of October, 1824, and the 15th of June, 1825, without authority or permission therefor, made public orders and instructions from the government, and official correspondence with the government.

Commodore Porter, before pleading to these charges, requested delay until the next morning, and in the meantime to be furnished with a true copy, stating as the reason for this request, that he had observed a difference between the copy furnished him by the department, and the one in possession of the court. He also requested to have counsel to assist in his defense. Both his requests were granted and Walter Jones, Esq., was admitted as his counsel.

On the 8th of July, the court having adjourned from the Navy Yard and assembled at the Marine Barracks, Washington, Commodore Porter, by permission of the court, delivered by way of plea, a protest against the

sufficiency and legal effect of the charges, after which he pleaded *not guilty*, reserving to himself the right during the progress of the trial, and in due time of excepting to the said charges and specifications, as designating no offense known to any law enacted for the government of the navy; as vague and indefinite, and altogether insufficient to put him on trial for the matters therein supposed to be charged.

The trial then proceeded. The sum of the offenses charged, was disobedience of orders, conduct unbecoming an officer, and disrespect to his superiors; but a careful examination of the evidence will, in our opinion, convince any unprejudiced person, that not a single specification of the charges was sustained. On the contrary, it was proved that Commodore Porter, at Foxardo, had complied with his instructions, which say: "In the case of pirates, the right of an armed force of one power to follow them into the territory of another is more complete. *In regard to pirates, there is no neutral power*, they being the enemies of the human race, all nations are parties against them."

This paragraph completely covers the point at issue, and had Commodore Porter desired it, he could not have had an order written that would have more completely exonerated him.

The testimony of Lieut Platt was pretty much according to the report he had made to Commodore Porter, but was still stronger in reference to the outrageous conduct of the alcalde, who seized him by the collar, and with two soldiers, forced him into prison, against his most solemn protests. The officers who had accompanied the Commodore to Foxardo merely testified to the facts mentioned in his report.

In the testimony of Mr. Stephen Cabot, U. S. consular agent at St. Thomas, it was shown that his store was broken open by pirates on the night of the 24th of October, and robbed of five thousand dollars worth of goods, the property of American citizens. That facts came to his knowledge, proving that the alcalde of Foxardo, and one John Campus, a wealthy resident of that place, were in collusion with the thieves, and had the goods in their possession, while Lieut. Platt was imprisoned, until the evi-

dences of their guilt could be removed. Mr. Cabot further stated, that the alcalde of Foxardo had sent a message, offering to obtain the value of the goods, provided Cabot would relinquish one-half the amount to him. The same thing was proved by the evidence of Lieut. J. D. Sloat, and it was established that the party landed by the Commodore maintained perfect order, committing no acts unfriendly to Spain, or oppressive to any of her subjects. It was proved that Foxardo had long been a nest of pirates, no less than twelve robberies of stores at St. Thomas, and several vessels had been conducted from that place, and it was one of the places indicated in the instructions of Secretary Thompson, who asserted that "in regard to pirates there is no neutral power."

In this case, the offense was connived at by the two principal local officials of the Spanish government, whose position could no more protect them than if they had been the meanest of the populace. Had these officials robbed a vessel, and then escaped to the shore, they could have been pursued and shot with impunity; but it was deemed a violation of neutral rights to interfere with pirates, who were enjoying their plunder on shore, and aggravating their offenses by subjecting our officers to every indignity, including filthy imprisonment.

By no logic could the judge advocate twist the transactions at Foxardo into the offense with which the Commodore was charged, though he showed himself clever enough to have convicted George Washington of cutting that cherry tree with his little hatchet.

It was also clearly proved, to the discomfiture of the judge advocate, that an article published in the *National Journal*, calculated to forestall public opinion and to influence the members of the court, was written by him. The pamphlet, too, which was prepared by Mr. Coxe, and on which Commodore Porter grounded his exceptions, was advertised for sale on the day after the sentence of the court was published, which was conclusive proof that the said pamphlet was actually in press at the time these exceptions were taken. In fact there was no evidence presented during the trial, which substantiated the charges, although some side issues were raised with the evident

desire of influencing the members of the court, and showing where lay the desire for conviction.

The conduct of the Spanish officials was proved to have been in violation of all law, yet at the end of the trial, the United States presented the humiliating spectacle of submission to insult, and by their action (before any complaint was made), seeming to beg that Spain should take no notice of a high spirited officer, who had protected the honor of his country.

The court sat forty days with but a short time allotted for the defendant to collect evidence, and with every effort to *accumulate* testimony against him. He was allowed to hold no communication with the court, except through his enemy, the judge advocate, the court deciding against his pleas, or applications in almost every instance.

Although the judge advocate endeavored to prove that Commodore Porter had published certain official documents, yet, when it was requested by the Commdore, that the secretary of the navy should be called in relation to a certain anonymous article, which the honorable gentleman had printed in the newspapers, and which had elicited the publication complained of, the court refused to grant the request. At length, after a long sitting with closed doors, the Commodore was called upon for his defense, which, after being submitted to the judge advocate, was delivered orally to the court.

DEFENSE.

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Court Martial: After having endured a long and mortifying suspense, the frown of undefined indignation, and the anxieties of ambiguous censure, I have experienced a sensible relief, from a public investigation promising a determinate issue, which in no event can place me in a situation less tolerable than that from which it takes me. Even the hard measure that has been dealt me, in the manner and spirit of the prosecution, both before and during the progress of my present trial, is amply compensated, whatever be the event, by the opportunity afforded me of a full and open justification before the world, and especially before a tribunal, between the members of which and myself at least, so much of intelligence and community of sentiment exists, as to free me from the apprehension of receiving *less* than justice at their hands, and to acquit me, in their minds, from the

suspicion of appealing to their favor for anything *more* than justice. If preparatory censures have tended to wound my feelings, or to prejudice my cause; if a stern and jealous inquisition have probed every part of my professional character and conduct, where the sensitiveness of a man of honor, or the presumed defects of human frailty, might be supposed to shrink from the searching point; and if taken unawares by the suddenness of the attack, or the novelty of my situation, an excruciated sensibility may, for a time, have broken through the guards that should have preserved me unmoved and self balanced in mind and temper; yet, after all, I bow with humility and experimental conviction to the moral system of compensations that bringeth good out of evil, for innocence made but the more manifest and clear, from the severity of its trials, is the bright reversion that might have animated hope, and endued me with the passive fortitude of endurance through a longer and more penal term of tribulation. The accusations which I am now to answer, present this singular feature, while they branch out into two distinct classes of offense, the most dissimilar, and the most unequal in the quality and degree of the legal and moral guilt imputed, as in the importance and interest to the community of the principles involved, and of the actions to be condemned or justified. They all originate in the same source, and are closely connected by the causes that have produced them, and by the passions and motives that uphold them.

The first branch of the accusation brings into discussion the most important and vital principles of the high and awful sanctions, by which national sovereignty is to be maintained, and vindicated by arms, while the second hinges upon the minute punctilios of ceremonious respect. That a devoted servant of the republic, who had consumed the flower of his years and the vigor of his life in arduous, and as he hoped, acceptable services; who had looked for approbation, if not for honor as his reward, for an unstinted exposure to labors, privations and dangers; so much the more disinterested, as however beneficial to his country and to mankind, it promised few of the personal gratifications which may laudably be sought in the renown of more striking and brilliant achievements; who was conscious of having acted with the most implicit respect, and exact fidelity to what he understood to be the views and instructions of his superiors; who with wasted powers of life but untiring activity and zeal had exerted for the fulfillment of those instructions to the utmost scope of their letter and spirit, whatsoever of efficient energy a constitution worn and broken in the public service had left him; that such a one should have been somewhat sore and impatient under rebuke that came like a portent and a wonder upon his astonished

senses, was far more natural than that complaints of misconstruction and injustice should have been interperted into disrespect; and free but decorous remonstrance treated as little less than mutiny.

In my justification against these charges I must regret the necessity of occupying a larger portion of the valuable time of this court than any intrinsic difficulties in the questions themselves might possibly have required, but the terms in which the charges have been framed, their often complained of vagueness and uncertainty as to the nature and degree of the offense intended to be charged; the mystery observed as to the application of the facts and circumstances given in evidence to the gist of the accusation, and the defect of any advertisement of the points intended to be insisted on in the prosecution, or that were supposed to require elucidation in the defense; all these circumstances compel me to traverse a wide field as well of conjectural as of obvious justification.

Charge 1. Before I proceed to discuss any matter of fact or law put in issue by the first charge, it may be useful to attain as distinct an understanding as practicable of its terms and of the nature and degree of the guilt imputed by it. The general head under which the offense intended to be charged is classed and characterized, consists of two members: first "disobedience of orders," second "conduct unbecoming an officer." The first, doubtless, falls under a general description of military offense common to every organized body of military force in the world, but in every military code by which such an event may be punished, the character and functions of the officer from whom the orders are supposed to emanate, and the nature of such orders, are usually defined with all reasonable precision. In the 5th and 14th of our naval articles of war, this species of offense is defined in terms nearly equivalent to the corresponding articles in the naval and military codes of Britain, and in our own military articles of war. Our 5th naval article of war is, in terms, restricted to the orders of a *commanding* officer, when preparing for, or joining in, or actually engaged in battle. But the 14th article conceived in terms somewhat more comprehensive, enacts that "no officer or private shall *disobey* the lawful orders of his *superior* officer, or *strike* him, &c., while in the *execution* of the *duties* of his *office*." The punishment of the offense in either of its modes or degrees, is "death, or such other punishment as a court martial shall inflict." Then if by the "disobedience of orders," here charged be intended any offense known to the naval articles of war and punishable under them, it implies that I had received from some *superior officer*, an actual command either while engaged or about to be engaged in battle or otherwise,

"in the execution of the duties of his office," some order which I had disobeyed; and so had come in the danger of a *capital*, as every military offense is denominated which is punishable with death; though it be left to the discretion of a court martial to inflict any less punishment.

When this general charge comes to be deduced into particulars in the form of a specification, *no orders* either commanding or forbidding me to do any act whatever, are set forth, either in terms or in substance; no commanding officer or superior from whom they are supposed to have issued is either named or described. The specification simply sets out the naked and insulated fact of a certain invasion by force of arms upon the territorial sovereignty of Spain accompanied by "*divers acts of hostility* against the subjects and the property of that power:" and instead of any averment that in so doing the orders of a commanding or superior officer had been disobeyed, the conclusion of the specification branches out into a "contravention of the *constitution* of the United States, and of the *law of nations* and a violation of instructions from the *government* of the United States." Now whether any "contravention of the *constitution* or of the *law of nations*" not involved in a disobedience of military orders be an offense cognizable under this charge by a court martial; or whether general *instructions* from the *government* be identical with the orders of a *commanding* or *superior* officer and a *violation* of such *instructions* equivalent to a *disobedience* of such *orders* are questions of grave import, and will doubtless in their due order, receive the deliberate consideration of the court. At present, however, we are endeavoring to ascertain the essential character and terms of the offense actually intended to be charged; its *legal* attributes and consequences may be separately considered.

As to the second member of the general charge, "conduct unbecoming an officer," whether it be intended to describe a mere incident to every act of military disobedience, or to impute some gratuitous and superadded circumstance of aggravation in the mode and degree of it, and to inflame the guilt of simple disobedience by some wanton abuse in the manner and circumstances attending the commission of the acts; as in the "divers acts of hostility" said to have been committed "against the subjects and property of the king of Spain," are questions left in the characteristic obscurity and uncertainty which have all along, veiled the "head and front of my offending" from any distinct view of it that might have enabled me to perceive or to divine its *extent.* * * * * *

The rights and duties incidental to a state of war, as it affects every party directly or indirectly concerned, have been the subject

of such frequent and elaborate discussion in our own intercourse with foreign nations and have received such lucid definition and such various illustration from our most eminent statesmen, that we may be said to have compiled and digested from the best authorities and the most enlightened views of the subject, a system of public law upon these topics; which if it be not generally adopted by the family of civilized nations, as the moral and political influence of our example extends, may at least be received among ourselves as superseding, to every practical purpose, a reference to the more general and less applicable doctrines of elementary writers. Our discussions with the powers of Europe while they were belligerent and we were neutral, have settled for ourselves the positive *rights* of neutrals; and our more recent discussions and collisions with one of those powers, while we were belligerent and she neutral have equally well settled the positive *duties* of neutrals. The rule to be deduced from the latter is so much the more intelligible in its doctrine and obvious and practical in its application, since it has grown out of collisions and discussions of the belligerent rights of the United States as correlative to the neutral duties of this very power, Spain; whose territorial sovereignty I am charged with having violated.

Here follows a discussion on the rights of belligerents, which, though pertinent to the trial, is rather too long for insertion.

* * * * In the emphatic language of Mr. Adams, "The right of the United States can as little compound with *impotence* as with *perfidy*." All this infers no hostility against the neutral; but proceeds upon the great principle of self defense, which justifies a belligerent to disarm his adversary, to turn upon him his own weapons, and deprive him of the permitted or usurped means of annoyance. There may be occasions, when the misconduct of a neutral sovereign might expose him to the resentment of the belligerent sovereign, and make him an actual party in the war; but I here speak merely of those incidental rights of actual war, which affect him in his neutral character, and require not the decision of the sovereign will to authorize the enforcement of them; which are inseparable from belligerent operations, and are summarily exerted in the exigency of the moment, at the discretion of the commander to whom the conduct of such operations is intrusted; "of the necessity for which," says Mr. Adams, speaking of the invasion and occupation by military force of neutral territory, including its fortified places and garrisons, whenever the effectual prosecution of hostilities against the enemy shall, in the opinion of the general, make it necessary, "he has the most effectual means of forming a

judgment, and the vindication of which is written in every page of the law of nations, as well as in the first law of nature, self defense." The principle is not confined to neutral territory, but extends to all the ramifications of neutral sovereignty, and to all the modifications of neutral property; for it is the same identical principle modified by circumstances, that authorizes naval commanders, from the admiral of a fleet to the lieutenant commandant of a schooner, or a barge, or even the captain of a privateer, to seize upon the high seas, neutral ships carrying contraband, infringing a blockade or committing other unneutral acts.

The flag of a nation is just as inviolable an emblem of sovereignty as territory; and the ship that bears it is, constructively, a part of the territory and just as much entitled to protection.

"There will need" (to borrow again the language of Mr. Adams, the condensation and force of which, added to its authority, may dispense with other illustration) "no citations from printed treatises on international law to prove the correctness of this principle. It is engraven in adamant on the common sense of mankind; no writer ever pretended to contradict it, none of any reputation or authority ever omitted to insert it."

I cannot forbear, however, adding to the domestic documents of our public transactions, by which both our belligerent and our neutral rights are so amply unfolded and accurately defined, the authority of the venerable and illustrious Grotius, who may be styled the father of the modern law of nations. In laying down the rule by which neutrals may expose themselves to the treatment of enemies, he also *recommends* certain modifications of the strict belligerent right; not as necessary limitations or exceptions, which a neutral may insist on, but as being merely *recommended* by a spirit of moderation and humanity; and which a belligerent may disregard, according to his own discretion, or his estimate of necessity or prudence.

* * * * The principles established by the documents now adverted to, regard Spain in her simple character of strict *neutrality;* without reference to her higher and more sacred obligations as an *ally*.

In the late war with Great Britain, in which the Indians of Florida took part against us, General Jackson was expressly authorized by President Madison, to take Pensacola, if it were found to have fostered Indian hostilities by ministering to their wants and affording them the means of annoyance. "If," proceeds the order as indited by Secretary Armstrong, "the Spaniards admit into their towns, feed and arm and coöperate with the hostile Indians, you must *strike* upon the broad principles of self-preservation."

A lengthy argument on the action of Jackson in Florida, is omitted, being mentioned as a matter of history elsewhere. It has a strong bearing on Commodore Porter's case, and, taken as a precedent, fully justifies him.

* * * * Now let the principles, so clearly deduced from these most authoritative precedents, be applied to my situation and conduct as commander of the squadron in the West Indies, engaged in actual war against the pirates. From a variety of causes, too obvious to be mentioned, the Spanish islands in the West Indies were, for the most part, more destitute of any practical, steady and efficient governments, and police, than the inhabited parts of the Floridas. The pirates who sought shelter there, were not like the miserable savages of Florida, insulated and cut off from access to other quarters for relief, so as to be dependent on Spanish towns and garrisons for occasional supplies of provisions, arms, and ammunition. On the contrary, their enterprising and successful piracies, and the accumulated plunder of land and sea, gave them influence and favor, not only in the more barren or thinly inhabited districts, but in some of the more considerable towns and settlements; while their numbers, their resources, and their ferocity overawed and intimidated those who were not seduced by participation, in the spoils of piratical enterprise. When the hot pursuit of our cruisers had driven them from the sea, and destroyed all their vessels, capable of keeping the sea, they retreated into the various parts of Cuba and Porto Rico; in some places, banded themselves against the local authorities, and effectually defied every effort to reduce them; in other places they assumed various disguises, as fishermen, droguers, peddlers, etc., etc. As fishermen, they built huts and villages upon the coasts of these two islands, and kept up a constant intercourse with the inhabitants, from whom it was extremely difficult to distinguish them. The innumerable bays, inlets, shoals and harbors, about these islands, enabled them to conceal their boats, in which they nightly sallied forth from their holds, and committed innumerable piracies; as well upon the high seas, as in the towns and settlements, on the neighboring coasts. They then retreated with their plunder to their secret haunts, reassumed their disguises, and eluded detection and pursuit.

Here follows a comparison between Florida and Porto Rico, showing that the authority in the former was much more stable than in the latter, and that the atrocities of

the pirates called for more energetic measures than even the acts of the Indians living on Spanish soil.

* * * * As to Foxardo, you have it clearly proved, how notorious were that town and district, and an extensive tract of country around, as the most pernicious of these haunts for pirates; including two other noted places on the same coast, from twenty to twenty-five miles from Foxardo, called Nauquaba and Boca del Inferno, equally notorious for the resort of pirates, and as receptacles for their plunder. It was to the latter of these places, known by so characteristic an appellation, that the crew of the piratical vessel, driven on shore by Lieut. Sloat, attempted to retreat, as reported in his letter to the secretary of the navy, of the 19th of March last. I did not, however, act upon the sole authority of report or notoriety, more than sufficient as they are, when sufficiently credible to justify military movements. It was not till an American merchant, resident at St. Thomas, had been robbed of property to a considerable amount, in one of these marauding expeditions, traced upon credible information, to Foxardo; nor till after an officer of my squadron who had landed, in the most peaceful and inoffensive manner, to inquire after the pirates and the plunder, had been treacherously seized, and disgracefully treated at Foxardo, that I determined to land and make an impression upon that place. I presume no military or naval man is to be blamed for acting upon credible and circumstantial information; he is not to be expected to wait for either legal or moral certainty of proof. The necessity and propriety of the measure, and the correctness of the information, upon which I proceeded, are amply confirmed. 'Tis in proof that the spontaneous opinion of the merchants of St. Thomas, and of the whole squadron, without any particular communication from me, was clear and decided, not only for the necessity and propriety of the measure, but that it must and would be executed. My intentions were as clearly inferred, from what circumstances decided that they ought to be, as if I had fully declared them. The whole course and event of the action entirely confirmed every anticipation.

I no sooner approached the harbor, under the most unequivocal demonstrations of the real character of my squadron, than I found a party no wise distinguishable in arms, equipment or appearance from the pirates usually found on shore; and who, in the instances before mentioned, had attacked Captain Cassin and Lieuts. Kearney and Newton; by whom their villages and huts had been burned and destroyed. This party stood ready with two guns on a point of rock, and the instant I had anchored, without one act of hostility or menace on

my part, and without any previous parley on theirs, commenced hostilities by training the guns on my nearest vessel; and then on the boat which was approaching the shore; and nothing, I presume, but the perplexity in which they were kept between the two objects prevented them from firing on us. They dispersed before our party reached their battery, the guns of which we spiked. We found the village entirely deserted, no human being to be found with whom we could hold parley. When it is recollected that I had established a good understanding with the governors of Cuba and Porto Rico; and was acting in concert with them; had remitted to their jurisdiction pirates whom we had taken, and who had been punished by the local government; when all this was known and notorious, how could I, in reason, account for these demonstrations of hostility, immediately on my approach to the harbor of Foxardo; and for the flight of the party at the battery and the desertion of the village? Was I not authorized, nay bound, to conclude from these circumstances, taken in connection with the infamous character of the place, that it was a piratical establishment? Did it not require, at any rate, further investigation, and that I should proceed to examine into the state of things at the small town of Foxardo only a mile or two from the harbor? Nothing I think can exceed the caution and moderation with which I proceeded.

A flag was sent, in advance, with a letter addressed to a sort of inferior magistrate called an alcalde; the only officer, except a very low and disreputable person, called the captain of the port, who was to be found there. As we followed the flag into the interior, the most perfect order prevailed among our troops; and no whisper of complaint has been heard of the slightest injury to the persons or property of the inhabitants. The farther we advanced, new circumstances of suspicion arose to confirm all we had heard and all we had inferred from what we saw at our first landing.

There was the same irregular assemblage of armed men; equally equivocal in character and appearance as those who had been dispersed at the battery; without any of the ordinary badges to distinguish them, as belonging to the government of the country; and, by their causeless hostility, justifying the worst suspicions of their character and intentions. When I met the alcalde, accompanied by some of the better sort from the town, he excused himself for his conduct to Lieuts. Platt and Ritchie, as having been under *compulsion* from *others;* and this was repeated to Lieut. Platt by the interpreter and another person in the alcalde's train. The nature of the compulsion and the persons from whom it proceeded, were not explained; and, as Lieut. Platt declares, there appeared some strange mystery about the transaction. The mystery may, perhaps, be very

satisfactorily cleared up; when it is recollected that Lieuts. Platt and Ritchie, at their former visit, had at first been received by the alcalde with civility; but that the rabble was extremely exasperated against them. From all which, connected with the infamy of the place, and the very suspicious conduct and appearance of the people whom we encountered, it might reasonably enough have been concluded that the pirates were strong, both in numbers and influence, and had overawed and held in subjection the miserable functionary who bore the badge without the substance of a regularly constituted authority; whom it would have been absurd and derogatory to any government to have treated as qualified to challenge the respect due to a sovereign in the person of his representative.

Then was not here presented, a clear case of the "jurisdiction of Spain ceasing at the point, where her weakness failed to maintain her authority?" What possible distinction between the hostile appropriation of Spanish territory, and Spanish means to our injury by the pirates in this instance, and by the Seminoles and other savages in Florida? In truth, every circumstance, and every reason, that were admitted as the most triumphant justification of the course pursued in the campaign in Florida, are here more clear and pronounced, and yet, because I merely displayed my force on Spanish territory, by way of intimidation, exacted an apology for the past, and promise of amendment for the future, and spiked two guns from which, on leaving the harbor, I should have been in imminent danger of a raking fire, from a lawless banditti, who might have secreted themselves from pursuit and punishment; for this I have been recalled in displeasure, and subjected to a rigorous and penal prosecution, notwithstanding the clear proof now manifest to the court, that the most beneficial consequences had resulted from this operation; that instead of producing any impediment to the service from the ill-will and irritation either of the authorities or inhabitants of the island, it served to awe the disaffected, and to inspire universal respect for our arms and character.

From the subsequent correspondence of Lieut. Sloat, it appears that Governor Torres had been reported to have dropped some hasty expressions of anger, but if he really uttered such, it was a momentary ebullition, for his letter to Lieut. Sloat of the 17th of March last, sufficiently demonstrates his good will, and indeed contains warmer expressions of thanks for our exertions, than are to be found in any of his preceding communications. The effect upon the public in general was decided and instantaneous, indeed the increased respect and confidence in the vigor, determination and efficiency of our measures, and the consequent facilities likely to be obtained, in the pursuit of our object, exceeded all expectation. The public honors

bestowed on Lieut. Platt at Ponce, only forty miles from Foxardo, and expressly on account of the share he had borne in the affair of Foxardo, may give some idea of the prevailing sentiment.

As I have said, nothing could exceed the astonishment with which I received an intimation of the displeasure of my own government. The only apprehension I entertained, and the only circumstance, having the remotest tendency to self-reproach in the whole affair, were that I had fallen too far short of the point to which my authority would have reached, and to which my duty, under existing circumstances, should have pushed it, that I had too scrupulously and indiscriminately applied that precept of the divine teacher, which is so humanely recommended by the venerable Grotius in mitigation of the rigors of war; and had suffered the tares to grow, where there was no wheat in danger of being rooted up with them; or so little, in proportion, that it must necessarily be choked by the tares; that I had not used due precaution to ascertain that there were even ten righteous persons to be found among them whom I encountered at Foxardo. Indeed, if I were, at this day, under trial for not having seized and garrisoned, or destroyed the village at the harbor, and even the town of Foxardo, as pernicious pirate nests; for not having arrested and made prisoners the people; or those at any rate who had made any demonstrations of hostility; I should have conceived myself in far more danger of censure, for having left undone those things which I ought to have done, than now for doing those things which I ought not to have done. My best, if not my only defense, in such case, would have been the want of the force, and the means necessary to give complete effect to the operation, and the eventual benefits resulting from the actual and more moderate operation.

Here follows a recapitulation of the events at Foxardo, and a further reference to similar cases, which is omitted, not being strictly necessary to give an understanding of the defense.

* * * * The war against the pirates in the West Indies, was just as formally declared, as any of our preceding wars by land or sea, except the late war with England, and carried with it all the concomitants and incidents of a public war; without regard to the form of the preliminaries, or the circumstances of its commencement. The machine, being once put in motion, was impelled by its own inherent energies; without the help of proclamations or other paper muniments. A naval force was placed by congress, at the disposal of the president, to be employed in the most effectual way, according to the *best of his judgment*, and under *suitable instructions* to the com-

manders, to repel the aggressions and depredations of the pirates. Under the authority of this act, and the instructions of the president, the war against the pirates was commenced and carried on. That it was a regular war, against public enemies, and entitled, not only to equal but to greater respect from other nations, than ordinary wars, is clearly established by reason and authority.

Pirates are not the enemies of one nation only, but of the whole human race, and all civilized nations are or ought to be in league against them. There can in the nature of things be no neutrals in such a war. As I have before remarked, the rights of war in general seem to have been derived, for the most part, from the analogies of war against pirates. We find that the president, in his message to congress, explaining and justifying the conduct of General Jackson towards the Spanish authorities in Florida, enumerates (as he had before done in regard to Amelia island and Galveston) their encouragement of *buccaneering*, as one of the enormities which had forfeited their neutral character. General Jackson himself, in his official correspondence, justifying the apparent severity of his proceedings against persons claiming Spanish protection, can find no more emphatic reprobation of their character, as placing them and their abettors out of the pale of the law of nations, and as justifying every extremity against both, than to denominate them *land pirates*. Grotius, as I have remarked, infers belligerent rights, in regard to third parties, not being enemies, from the analogous right to destroy pirates, though to the danger and probable damage of innocent persons.

If the question rested on general reason and authority, it would seem to be settled: but I have a stronger and more practical warrant in the very instructions which I am charged with having violated, a document that loses none of the authority due to its official character from having been signed and probably indited by a gentleman whose talents and learning had illustrated a high judicial station in New York before he was called to the administration of the navy department; and are now added to the splendid assemblage of the same qualities on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States. These instructions lay down the doctrine and apply it to the actual case in terms that leave not the shadow of a doubt of the relations in which I was to hold myself as well towards the pirates as the Spanish authorities and people.

"You will announce," says my letter of instructions, "your arrival and object to the authorities, civil and military, of the island of Cuba; and endeavor to obtain, as far as shall be practicable, their *coöperation*, or at least their favorable and friendly *support*, giving

them the most unequivocal assurance, that your sole object is the destruction of pirates."

"The system of piracy which has grown up in the West Indies, has obviously arisen from the war between Spain and the new governments, her late provinces in this hemisphere; and from the limited force in the islands, and their sparse population, many portions of each being entirely uninhabited and desolate, to which the *active authority* of the government does not extend.

"It is understood that establishments have been made by parties of these banditti in those uninhabited parts, to which they carry their plunder and retreat in time of danger. It cannnot be presumed that the government of any island will afford any protection or countenance to such robbers. It may, on the contrary, confidently be believed, that all governments, and particularly those most exposed, will afford all means in their power for their suppression. Pirates are considered, by the laws of nations, the enemies of the race. It is the duty of all nations to put them down; and none who respect their own character or interest will refuse to do it, much less afford them an asylum and protection. The nation that makes the greatest exertions to suppress such banditti has the greatest merit. In making such exertions, it has a *right* to the aid of every other power, to the extent of its means, and to the enjoyment, under its sanction, of all its rights in the pursuit of the object. In the case of belligerents, where the army of one party enters the territory of a neutral power, the army of the other has a right to follow it there." In the case of pirates the right of the armed force of one power to follow them into the territory of another is more complete. In regard to pirates there is no neutral party, they being the enemies of the human race all nations are *parties against them and may be considered as allies.*" I lost no time in establishing an understanding with the governors of Cuba and Porto Rico, as recommended by these instructions, and as fully appear from the documents accompanying the president's message to congress, December 2, 1823, before referred to. From these it has been seen that both the governors recognized, without hesitation, the meritorious character of the war; pledged themselves for every aid and coöperation in their power; that, in various instances, they did coöperate, and actually received prisoners, taken by our squadron, both at sea and on land, and had them executed. Thus the *presumption*, upon which my instructions proceeded, that the local governments of these islands were to be considered and treated as allies, in a regular war, was confirmed and consolidated into a solemn compact, followed by all the practical and open evidences of alliance and common cause.

Here the Commodore shows, that the conduct of the inhabitants of Foxardo required him to use energetic measures, and he refers to our committing hostilities against France, without a declaration of war, and with instructions to our officers not more stringent than his.

* * * * I shall proceed to lay down a few simple rules of interpretation, by which the sense in which I so clearly understood, and acted upon my instructions, may be demonstrated as their true import and meaning.

1. The reason or final cause; the main end to be accomplished, deserves the first consideration. Then I was appointed to the command of the squadron, "for the purpose of repressing piracy, and affording *effectual protection* to the citizens and *commerce* of the United States." I am told, that it is my "duty to protect our commerce against all unlawful interruptions, and to guard the rights, both of persons and property, of the citizens of the United States, wherever it shall become necessary." Such is the final cause or end of the argument; and, upon that did General Jackson mainly rest the justification of his operations in Florida, when he appealed to that part of his instructions from the war department, which recommends "a speedy and successful termination of the war, as being required by the honor and interest of the United States," and he argues, that he pursued the only means, by which he could have effectuated such intent; and that the intent, both general and particular, which is expressed in the order, justified the means; these means being in themselves entirely conformable to the established laws and usages of war. The means by which I was to have accomplished the object of my command, were left to my discretion, under the guidance of some general rules, not at all more restrictive of the inherent authority of my station, than those prescribed to General Jackson, if as much so. The limitations of my authority, from which anything like a prohibition may be inferred, are expressed in two clauses. I am, in the first place, to do what? "where a *government* exists, and is *felt*, you will in all instances respect the *local authorities*, and only act in *aid* of and *coöperation* with them;" and again, "in no case are you at liberty to pursue, and apprehend any one, after having been forbidden to do so, by *competent authority* of the local *government*."

Now the term "government" or "local government," certainly means the supreme power of the country; and in reference to the Spanish islands, means the several provincial governments there established, called *local*, in contradistinction to the government of the mother country, which is supreme over all. It cannot be pre-

tended, that the term comprehends the inferior magistrates of obscure towns and villages. Then this government must not only *exist* but must be *felt*, and felt to what purpose, and to what extent? surely to no less than to maintain, practically and efficiently, its sovereign and active authority in the country, to the purpose and to the extent of holding it inviolate from the common enemy. In a preceding part of the instructions, places, to which the "*active authority* of the government does not *extend*," are spoken of, nor can it be less than the active authority of the government in any case, that I was bound to respect. I am told repeatedly, in my instructions, that I am to *presume* that the Spanish *authorities* and *people* will make common cause with me, and *cordially* coöperate with me. I am told so in the very clause which requires me to respect the local governments; and strange indeed if I had been required to respect them on any other terms.

* * * * Are these pirates to be viewed in such circumstances as either "Spanish authorities or people" in the sense of my instructions? If such were the presumptions upon which we were to act, we committed innumerable transgressions, in the instances of the several piratical establishments broken up and destroyed, without complaint, on the coast of Cuba, as before mentioned. But the meaning of this injunction to respect the local authorities, where a government exists and is felt, is decided by its immediate context; for it goes on to direct that I shall "only act in *aid* of, and *coöperation* with them." Now the one of these injunctions is just as obligatory as the other. Them, whom I am to "respect," I must also coöperate with and aid; they must be in a condition to challenge, for themselves, both or neither. Then, if I am to *respect* the people and authorities of the islands, who are identified in character and conduct with the pirates, I must also "act in aid of, and coöperation with them," and how consistent this may be with the main end and aim of repressing piracy and affording effectual protection to the commerce and citizens of the United States, needs no remark to illustrate. When I am told that I must not continue the pursuit of pirates on shore after having been forbidden to do so by *competent authority of the local government*, should I have been justified in accepting the prohibition of the pirates themselves, or of their known or strongly suspected associates and accessories, as from such *competent authority?* The only prohibition ever received by me, was in the form of open hostility and resistance; not otherwise to be accounted for, than as an attack upon the *suppressors*, and a defense of the *professors* of piracy. Lieut. Platt was not forbidden the pursuit and inquiry, which occasioned his first visit to Foxardo; but he was at first, received with insidi-

ous civility and a professed respect to his official character and mission, and in that guise was conducted to the town, where the treatment he afterwards received, was equally unaccountable, on any other ground than that of the people, or a great majority of them, making common cause or being identified with the pirates.

I am further directed, if "the crews of any vessels, which I have either seen engaged in acts of piracy, or have *just cause* to *suspect* as being of that character, retreat into the ports, harbors or settled parts of the islands, I may enter in pursuit of them, for the purpose of *aiding* the local *authorities* or *people* as the case may be, to seize and bring the offenders to justice, previously *giving notice* that it is my sole object." Then here is an affirmative direction (not necessary to communicate the authority, but only declaratory of an authority already inherent to my command), to pursue the enemy into the ports, harbors and settled parts of the islands; but qualified by a limitation, which necessarily supposes the presence of *authorities* or *people*, who have the *will*, and with my aid, the power to seize the offenders and bring them to justice. But suppose no authorities or people of that description are to be found; and though the country be ever so thickly settled, it is occupied and held by pirates and their accessories, who exert a controlling influence and effective power over the district, and hold what people or authorities there may be in check, or in close alliance; is not the hypothesis upon which the limitations of my otherwise absolute authority are expressly founded done away, and is not such authority consequently left in its pristine force? Is there any possible construction of the document, that could require of me to aid and assist people to seize and bring themselves to justice? The very case put by my instructions, as requiring the pursuit of the piratical crew was presented. I had just cause, more than to *suspect*, that such a crew, which had robbed an "*American citizen*" at St. Thomas, had retreated with their plunder to Foxardo, and in the pursuit of them I am encountered at the threshold by men of the most equivocal appearance, who stand forward to resist the *pursuers*, and to defend the *pursued*, without parley or warning of any kind. Then, was I not bound to conclude, that these men knew what they were about, and that the defenders and the persons pursued were the same? I knew to a certainty, that they were not, and in the nature of things could not be acting under the authority of the local government; but I had the strongest grounds to presume, that they were acting against it. What reason had I to presume, that they had any better authority than the pirates who fired upon Captain Cassin, near Cape Blanco, and upon Lieutenants Kearney and Newton, at

Cape Cruz; and who on other occasions and at other places committed the like violence; and upon being pursued to the interior were found to be settled in fishing villages, defended by cannon advantageously posted on the rocks?

It seems to me plainly impossible to construe my instructions, as a prohibition of the operation upon Foxardo, consistently either with their context or with the prominent and declared reason, or final cause of the course of service which they prescribed. A learned and judicious author has said that "the nature of every law must be judged of by the end for which it was made and by the aptness of things therein prescribed, unto the same end:" a rule which absolutely concludes the present question.

Here the Commodore compares his orders with those under which Jackson acted, and refers to the policy of the government at that time, which was in favor of acquiring Florida by any means, showing conclusively that a practical construction was given to his orders by the toleration by our government and that of the Spanish West Indies of the constant landing of our forces on those islands, the capture of the pirates on shore, destruction of their houses and goods, and delivery of their persons to the Spanish authorities.

* * * * A practical construction is given to my orders, by the toleration of all our previous descents upon Cuba, followed by the destruction of settlements having all the appearance of innocent fishing villages; and which were nevertheless found to belong to pirates in disguise. It has been seen how far the arts of deception were carried on the coast of Cuba; where the spectacle was presented of old men "with bald heads and hoary locks exposed to view," like the venerable sires of a peaceful and innocent generation of fishermen, and of matrons as if present, either to implore protection for themselves and helpless offspring, or, according to the account of one officer, like a celebrated heroine of a modern romance by their exhortations and example to inspire their husbands and sons to defend or avenge their homes and altars; but where all these plausible and imposing appearances proved to be only deceitful covers to the most atrocious of piratical establishments; for the utter extinction of which, upon no other warrant or authority than the discretion of the officers sent in pursuit of pirates, and acting upon the evidences and presumptions by which their conduct was to be determined in every new exigency of the service, these officers had received the approbation and applause of the government and the

country. Then if it were lawful to seize and chain these modern Proteii, on one shore, why not on another equally the theatre of their frauds? Had they possessed the fabled spirit of prophecy, ascribed to their ancient prototype, it must have puzzled themselves to divine how I could have incurred the displeasure, either of the Spanish government or my own, by pursuing them on the coast of Porto Rico, any more than on that of Cuba; at Foxardo any more than at Cayo Blanco or Cape Cruz; as before practiced, without censure or question, in former instances.

But suppose I have failed to establish the construction of my orders, as understood by myself and now explained, does it follow that I am guilty of any *disobedience* of *orders*, under the naval articles of war? The negative may be clearly maintained on two grounds.

1. The naval articles of war look only to orders given by a *superior* officer in immediate command; not to general instructions from the government, the observance of which, it is supposed, the government has, in its own hands the means of enforcing.

2. The instructions are *discretionary;* and no officer can be charged with the breach of a discretionary order unless he wilfully and corruptly misconstrue and prevent it. For no mistake of judgment can be, in the nature of things, punishable. Here is the law of nations laid down to me in my instructions; to be applied in a great variety of supposed circumstances, to facts as they arise.

To bring me within the scope of this most penal charge, it must appear that I was either positively ordered to do something that I omitted, or positively forbidden to do something that I did; or that, under pretense of executing a discretionary authority, I corruptly or maliciously abused it. * * * *

The second charge, "Insubordinate conduct, and conduct unbecoming an officer," is scarcely worth noticing. Commodore Porter remarks in relation to this charge:

* * * * Voluminous masses of documents, consisting of a miscellaneous correspondence, and a printed pamphlet of more than a hundred pages, were produced in evidence, under the several specifications, and indiscriminately read from beginning to end, without any specific designation or reference whatever to the passages or circumstances, wherein the offensive matter was supposed to consist, with the single exception of the alleged omissions, deficiencies and verbal inaccuracies charged upon that part of my pamphlet which purports to set out the proceedings of the court of inquiry, which were indeed vouchsafed after the trial had proceeded

for more than a fortnight. Additional masses, little less voluminous, of documents, and other collateral evidence have been introduced, and in like manner read from beginning to end, without the slightest intimation of the charge or the specification to which they are to be applied, far less the bearing they were supposed to have on any point of the accusation, or of the purpose or object of their introduction.

* * * * I have already remarked that I am not called upon to explain, or justify the tone of complaint indicated by the correspondence now produced, but I should be at no loss to specify such reasons, as upon the coolest reflection, I still think well founded. The manner of my recall, so incommensurate as I then knew and still know, with the merits of my conduct, which, if it had been as well understood then, as it must be now, I verily believe would have received applause instead of censure; the inequality of the treatment I received, and that extended to others under like circumstances; the continuing to hold me up as an ambiguous object of denunciation and calumny, or of indefinite suspicion, without investigation, after I had tendered myself prepared for the investigation to which I had been cited, were all circumstances that bore hard upon my thoughts. The magnanimous and triumphant support given to General Jackson, against a heavy and menacing cloud of discontent, the delicate treatment of Captain Cassin (as explained in the order of the navy department, to me of the 9th of April, 1823), who had the option to come home and explain *his* conduct, or to transmit a written explanation against grievous complaints (severe and unjust as they were), of the Spanish minister, altogether presented so strong a contrast to the manner and circumstances of my recall, as convinced me that I had, in some way, forfeited the favor of the administration. Nor did the administration appear so instantly and spontaneously struck with the enormity of my transgression at Foxardo as to account for my severe treatment, for my official report of the transaction lay unnoticed in the navy department for more than three weeks after it had been received and my letter of recall bears date on the very day that the inquiry of the affair was moved in congress. It was my *misfortune* and not my *fault* if any circumstances made it impolitic or in any manner inexpedient or unpleasant for the administration to stand the brunt of another congressional inquiry, or if, from my want of favor or official or personal importance or influence, there were no adequate motives to bring forward on their responsibility the justification which I could so easily have supplied.

'Tis true the secretary's letter to me (April 20, 1825), seems will-

ing to ease off the weight of the blow by mixing up other causes for my recall. I had indeed intimated a conditional wish to be relieved from the command, but I could never have inferred from my letter of recall, that it was in any degree caused by such intimation. Besides if that recall had proceeded at all from a disposition to gratify my particular wishes, why was it not so announced? Why was it promulgated as resulting solely from the necessity under which I was laid to justify my conduct? Why was the matter left for four months in equivocal suspension infinitely more penal than express disapprobation or determinate accusation? No reason has been assigned or can be fairly conjectured, even to this day, for having so long postponed my repeated and pressing instances for a speedy and effectual investigation.

I take this occasion to say that I should despise myself if I were capable of an insult or rudeness to gentlemen to whom I stood in my then or present relation to the president, and secretary of the navy. I should hold it as unmanly as to stand mute and awe struck, when I conceived myself justly entitled to complain. If any passage of my letters could reasonably have borne such a construction, I should have been grieved and have instantaneously disavowed this inference. On the other hand I am not sensible of any impropriety in the matter or the manner of my letters for which I can be censured by a court martial, without exacting from the officers of the navy the basest servility, without condemning them to a pusillanimous silence under the strongest sense of injury, or to cringe at the doors of departments and bureaus for justice.

I have discussed thus generally the merits of these letters because the generality and vaguenesss of the accusation enabled me not to be more particular. The letters as simply referred to by their dates in the specifications have been produced and read without the slightest intimation of the exceptionable passages, or of the person against whose dignity or feelings they transgressed, or wherein the offensiveness of them consisted. I must therefore leave it to others to discover or conjecture which of them or what part of them an officer of the navy, who honestly thinks himself aggrieved, dare not address to those who owe the duty and possess the means to redress him.

* * * * Having gone through all the stated charges and specifications it seems I am called on to answer some collateral matter having no manner of connection with the real merits of any question involved in the present trial, unless it be supposed to be a legitimate mode of attack to eke out the details of the existing charges and evidence by throwing the weight of an eminent man's character and opinion into the scale against me. But I have never

made it my ambition to bask in the smiles of power nor to rest my hopes of preferment to court such favor by any unmanly tone of adulation or subserviency. I have always considered my life and services as dedicated to my country, and myself as the servant of the nation, though undoubtedly responsible directly to the government, and bound not only to implicit obedience to all lawful commands, but to all proper deference and respect in my official and personal intercourse; and indeed deriving heartfelt enjoyment when such intercourse gave me an opportunity to cultivate the friendship of great and good men, whose talents and virtues had raised them to power. Upon these principles I feel less mortified than might have been supposed at the present attempt to raise any prejudice against me by the introduction of this extraneous matter; and I think too highly of this court to apprehend any unfavorable influence from it upon the merits of my cause.

Only a part of this defense was read to the court. Commodore Porter had been expected to present a written copy for their inspection before delivering it, but he commenced the address orally on the ground that he had not time to prepare a copy. The court permitted the reading of the defense to continue *for three days*, at the end of which time they informed the Commodore that if he did not produce a copy the next morning, they would proceed to decide upon the evidence without it, and as he did not supply them with a copy on the following day they proceeded to judgment. The regulations of the navy required that the defense should be submitted to the court before being read, and why this was not complied with, or why the court allowed the reading to continue, does not appear, but having once permitted the defense to commence and continue for several days, then to make objections and proceed to judgment, without complying with the regulations as regards a written defense is inexplicable. It is not easy to obtain all the facts of the case, nor the reasons for actions which now appear mysterious; but if the court had pursued a consistent course, it is fair to suppose that most of the events would have been plain enough which now seem inexplicable.

When it is recollected how impossible it was for the accused to anticipate the particular charges of the original accusation, and how deliberately the different points of at-

tack were unfolded, which had been kept out of sight until the beginning of the trial, it will appear as if a deliberate attempt was made to overwhelm the Commodore with accumulated evidence, without giving him any opportunity for rebuttal. After the court had closed its doors, and retired into conclave to deliberate on the final sentence, new articles and particulars had been elaborated from the undigested mass of papers thrown promiscuously upon the table.

In addition to the unjust verdict rendered by the court, after referring to their own leniency in dealing with the accused, they undertook to censure the latter, on the ground that his defense was delivered orally from notes under the appearance of reading it; an oral defense being, in the opinion of the court, a violation of all rule and precedent. As to the censures, it is positively denied that an oral defense is any such violation of rule and precedent; it is asserted, on the contrary, to be at the *election* of the accused, to present his defense either written or oral; and this is asserted upon the clearest authorities, both English and American. The rule is laid down by Mr. Tytler and General Macomb, in nearly the same terms, as follows: "When the evidence in support of the charges is closed, the prisoner may submit to the court, either *verbally* or in writing, a general statement of these defenses which he means to support by evidence. When the whole evidence on both sides is closed, the prisoner may, if he think proper, demand leave of the court to sum up, either *verbally* or in a written statement, the general matter of his defense; and to bring into one view the import of the proof of the charges; with such observations as he conceives are fitted to weaken its force; and the result of the evidence in defense, aided by any arguments that are capable of giving it weight."

But if it were otherwise, the proper time to have corrected the irregularity, was when it was committed; having submitted to it then, however reluctantly (the *reluctance* being entirely confined to the breasts of those who felt it, without the slightest intimation of it to the offending party), it was strange it should afterwards be found fault with; and certainly it is no satisfactory answer, to

say that it was mixed up with other, and distinct topics of censure merely to enhance the *gravamen.*

So much for the defense, which is a full vindication of Commodore Porter's conduct.

The court, after deliberate consideration, found the Commodore guilty of both the charges, and their specifications, but unfortunately for their own reputations for impartiality they say: "In deciding upon the first charge and the specification under it, the court, however, feels itself called upon, to ascribe the conduct of the accused, which is deemed censurable, to an *anxious disposition, on his part, to maintain the honor and advance the interest of the nation and of the service;* and the court, therefore, sentence and adjudge the said Captain David Porter, to be suspended for the term of six months from the date thereof."

If, by the preamble to the sentence, the court sought to avert public indignation for their being led by men temporarily in power, to inflict an unjust sentence, they failed in their object, for they gained nothing by it except severe criticism; and, perhaps, no event of Mr. Adams's administration gave less satisfaction to the public, than the proceedings against Commodore Porter. Of course, some of the partizan press took up the cause of the administration, and approved of the finding and sentence of the court, but such newspapers were in a small minority, for whatever may be the tendency of politicians and political papers to decry whatever appears to stand in the way of success to *the party*, very few could be found, in this instance, to support the administration in its policy of sacrificing a brave officer, to appease the anger of a feeble government, which the American people held in contempt, and from which they had nothing to fear.

It was felt, by a majority of people, that the United States had been humiliated by Commodore Porter's sentence, and our hurry to apologize to Spain, when she had not even asked an explanation; and, in fact, owed us one, for her treatment of an American officer and citizen. But it would appear that naval officers are not citizens, in the common acceptation of the term. Had the victim at Foxardo been the consul of some small port, appointed for his political services, and who had taken advantage of his

official position to violate the laws of Spain, the whole country would have been up in arms at the outrage, for the politician is the link in the chain which supports the head centre in office, while the naval officer is a paid mercenary, *food for powder and a fit subject for indignities.*

While the United States government was doing all in its power to degrade a faithful officer, for the performance of his duties, the governors of Porto Rico and St. Thomas were publicly approving his conduct, and it was a pity that the American government had not waited a little longer; in which case, it is probable Spain would have been as anxious to disavow the acts of their piratical alcalde, as the United States had been to deprecate her displeasure; for while the secretary of the navy was promulgating a sentence, which was really the highest compliment Commodore Porter ever received, Governor Torres of Porto Rico was issuing a general order, calling upon all his subordinates to give every aid to the American navy. The governor directs "that American officers, in pursuit of pirates, shall be privileged to all ports, harbors, anchorages, etc., which they may think proper to enter; and that all authorities will give them necessary aid and notifications for discovering them, and in case of meeting them the civil and military authorities will join themselves with the said American officers, to pursue the pirates by land and sea." The governor says, "that from the known zeal of the authorities referred to, that they will display the greatest energy and activity in this important service, for the extermination of the vile rabble which disgraces humanity."

In the mean time, the governor had removed the offending alcalde from office; although his successor was not a model of virtue, being willing enough to encourage piracy, according to the custom among officials of the lower class in the Spanish West Indies, who did not by any means believe with Franklin that honesty is the best policy.

The real motive for the action of our government, in the case of Commodore Porter, will probably never be known. It certainly conferred no honor upon the administration, which, though remarkable for strict economy of the public money and known to be possessed of statesmanlike quali-

ties, was not careful, in this instance, of the rights of our citizens abroad.

Commodore Porter was not constituted to bear with equanimity, what he considered degradation. He had expected a complete vindication of his course, at the hands of a court composed of his brother officers, who could understand better than a civilian the merits of the case; particularly a civilian, who, although possessed of some of the high attributes which should characterize the head of the naval establishment, was certainly not an impartial judge. The whole affair looks as if the object had been to find an excuse to deprive Commodore Porter of his command, and to do this, it was necessary to have him censured by a court of his brethren in arms. There was a spirit of persecution running through the whole course of this trial, from the conduct of the judge advocate, who charged the Commodore in every case with some heinous offense, as "scandalous falsehood," "forged letters," "malicious, false and scandalous libels," etc., to the anonymous fabrications of the same hand, "that a personal appeal had been made to him to drop the charges, said to have been followed by a menace in case he refused to do so." Instead of being tried by the officers composing the court, Commodore Porter was really tried by a judge advocate, whose competency he denied, and tried; not as an officer who had never hesitated to peril his life for his country, and who might at the worst be guilty of an error in judgment, but as a criminal upon whom it was necessary to cast the greatest obloquy.

Many years have passed since these events occurred, but their evil effects are felt to this day; in the destruction of a handsome competency and a happy home; and in the scattering of a large and dependent family, who were called upon to give up a parent who became an alien in foreign lands, to enable him to provide for their support. Most of the sons entered the service of the country, where they had to encounter the prejudices and animosities of the men, who, having committed injustice in the trial of Commodore Porter, pursued the same course towards his descendants. They never forgot his words, that "he could not associate with those who were led away by men in power to inflict an unrighteous sentence."

Time has gathered all the actors in those proceedings, court, judge advocate, administration, and defendant, to the tomb; they have all appeared before that tribunal where the thoughts and motives of all are revealed.

In expressing an opinion, as to the result of the revelation, I would proceed cautiously, as one is apt to do, when traveling in dim twilight over unfamiliar roads; but justice is one of the great attributes of Heaven, and we believe the scales are often turned there, in favor of the oppressed on earth. This is putting the matter as mildly as possible.

Commodore Porter received his sentence quietly, and did not gratify his enemies by letting them see he felt their injustice, but he could not stand what he considered degradation, and therefore made preparations to leave the navy, in which he thought he could no longer be useful, and where he would be constantly coming in contact with the men who had lent themselves to his apparent disgrace, and with whom he could no longer associate as brothers. True, his sentence had been condemned by public opinion, and his friends considered the finding of the court a high compliment; and, could the Commodore have subdued his feelings, and taken time for reflection, he might have continued for many years an ornament to the service, long after those who had been so active in persecuting him, had gone to their graves, or to the *oblivion* of private life; but, unfortunately, philosophic patience does not always accompany a proud, energetic and honest character, and an officer, governed by the highest motives, cannot bear with unjust censure from those who should have upheld him, instead of being blindly led at the dictation of men in power. The Commodore was also unduly sensitive with regard to attacks from the press. The administration journals, not contented with the fact that their representatives in power had sacrificed him, censured all the opposition papers that criticized his sentence, and tried to soil his reputation by every means in their power.

Had the Commodore lived to our days, he would have seen how the people can place a man on the highest pedestal, and after almost worshiping their hero for a season, hurl him from his eminence and pelt him with filth from

the gutter, replacing him by another idol who is shortly to share a similar fate. A nation, in this respect, too often resembles a crowd of boys who labor through a winter's day, with half frozen limbs, to raise a colossal image of snow, and when finished they scarce take time to admire their work before battering it to pieces. Such treatment is too often the penalty of greatness. The higher a man ascends, the more conspicuous object he becomes for detraction, and few would incur the penalty, if they could anticipate it, even for the highest honors.

It is a singular fact, which, though probably unknown to Commodore Porter, is now a matter of history, that the head of the administration which pursued him so relentlessly, for a supposed violation of the neutrality of Spain, should have interposed his powerful influence to shield General Jackson, at the time of his celebrated invasion of Florida. Of all the members of Mr. Monroe's cabinet, Mr. John Q. Adams, then secretary of state, *alone* upheld and applauded the conduct of the hero of New Orleans, and it is certain that but for Mr. Adams's support, Jackson would have been recalled and treated as Com. Porter was subsequently for a similar "offense." It is plain enough, from the above circumstances, that Mr. Adams could not have considered the Commodore's conduct at Foxardo otherwise than proper; and, consequently, the only real charge against him, so far as the administration was concerned, falls to the ground.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHEN Commodore Porter received the sentence of the court martial, he was the father of eight children, who had to be provided for. His expenses during the trial, for counsel fees, etc., amounted to nearly a year's pay of his grade, which at that period was very small. It was therefore necessary for him at once to take steps to better his condition, as his liberal way of living since the close of the war, had made serious inroads upon his private means, and compelled him to rely upon his salary in a great measure for his support. At that time, the war between Spain and the Spanish American republics—her late dependencies—was being vigorously prosecuted on both sides, and unfortunately, the tempter stood in the Commodore's way in the shape of the Mexican minister, who, in behalf of his government, invited him to assist the young republic to gain, from the mother country, an acknowledgment of her independence. The Mexicans had a small force of naval vessels, but were without officers or seamen, and the national exchequer was very low.

Commodore Porter having been sufficiently punished to gratify Mr. Adams's administration, they offered him the hand of friendship, and evinced no further hostility. They had shifted whatever odium there might be in the Foxardo affair, from their own shoulders to his, by a sentence inflicted by brother officers, who were supposed to know all the merits of the case, and to deal impartially; but they now found that they had committed a mistake, and that the great body of the American people did not approve of their action. In fact the people were too patriotic to witness, unmoved, the degradation of one of the nation's most faithful servants for "upholding the honor of the flag;" for the country had arrived at the point where its traditions were cherished with pride, and the community was

anxious to keep the government up to the level of its own independence. The feeling towards Spain was also much as it is at present—a disposition to rebuke her despotic acts, and teach her the necessity of respecting the rights and property of our citizens.

During his short suspension, the government placed no restriction upon the Commodore's movements, and he asked and obtained permission to absent himself from the United States, with the design of proceeding to Mexico, and seeing for himself the condition of affairs and whether there were sufficient inducements for him to enter the Mexican service.

At that time, there was in process of construction, at New York, by the celebrated naval architect Henry Eckford, who afterwards went into the Turkish service, a twenty-two gun brig for the Mexican navy, called the Guerrero. The Commodore determined to take passage in her to Vera Cruz. A number of young officers of our navy, wished to accompany him, but he dissuaded most of them from doing so, only availing himself of the services of a sufficient number to take the vessel to her destination. On the 29th of January, 1826, he writes to a friend: "I am preparing to go to Mexico, and shall be absent about three months; at the expiration of that time shall be better able to answer your inquiry. There is scarcely a doubt in my mind, that I shall join the Mexicans, but I shall view the ground first."

From this letter it appears, that the Commodore had not yet finally concluded to resign his position in our navy and had the administration been just enough to remit his sentence, he would never have left the service to which he was greatly attached.

The Guerrero at length sailed, in the latter part of April, 1826, in command of the Commodore's nephew, Lieut. David H. Porter; passed midshipman Alexander Thompson, and Charles Hawkins went out as watch officers; Dr. Boardman surgeon, and Mr. Law secretary. The Commodore also took with him his two sons, boys of the respective ages of ten and twelve years. All these persons expected to join the Mexican navy in case the Commodore accepted service under that government. He

might have taken with him half the young officers in the navy had he desired to do so, but he did not think it proper to advise any one to join his fortunes until he was certain of being in a position to serve them.

On his arrival at Vera Cruz towards the end of May, 1826, the Commodore was received with every attention, and the Mexicans were highly delighted to get possession of the Guerrero, which was a valuable addition to their little navy.

When the Spanish government received intelligence that Commodore Porter had been invited by the Mexicans to take command of their navy, they directed their minister at Washington to use every effort to prevent it, and to offer him on the part of Spain the $60,000, which had been wrongfully withheld in 1810, by the consulado at Havana, and to which we have previously referred, but the Commodore indignantly refused to accept what he could only consider as a bribe, although the large amount involved, would have made him independent. Besides his ardent spirit longed for action, and he was happy at the opportunity of giving his services to the young republic fighting for independence against an unnatural mother.

The Spanish government then determined to prevent his joining the Mexicans if possible, by capturing the brig on her way to Vera Cruz, and the Spanish brig of war Hercules was therefore directed to cruise in the vicinity and try to intercept the vessel as she entered the harbor. On the day previous to making land, a brig of war was made out to the northward carrying all sail in chase. The Guerrero, under top gallant sails, stood on her course without heeding the stranger. She had seventy good men, who were perfectly willing to have a bout with the Spaniards, and though only six men to a gun the Hercules would have met her match, but on coming within three miles of the brig, the Spaniards tacked ship and stood in another direction, while the Guerrero soon after anchored under the guns of the grim fortress of San Juan de Ulloa.

As soon as he could make the necessary arrangements the Commodore started on horseback for the city of Mexico, accompanied by Dr. Boardman, his secretary, Mr.

Law, an English supercargo, the Commodore's two sons and a couple of servants, and declining an escort of soldiers, under the impression that there was more danger of being robbed by them than by professional banditti. The journey was long and fatiguing, there were no inns deserving the name, nothing to eat except the everlasting national dish, *frijoles and tortillas*, and nothing to drink but *pulque*.

The first day's ride to Jalapa over the hot sand was very tedious; but when the travelers reached this beautiful place, where the flowers were blooming in abundance, where the air was soft and refreshing, and where they were received by the authorities with the most liberal hospitality, all their toils were forgotten.

After resting a couple of days, they continued on their journey, and at the city of Puebla were again the recipients of great attention. On the 5th of June, they came in sight of Tenochtitlan (Mexico) the great city of the Aztecs, formerly in the time of the conquest surrounded by Lake Tezcuco, with its beautiful floating gardens. The lake is now so diminished by draining, that it is several miles from the city, the intervening space being crossed by long causeways. Here the party halted and gazed with delight on the magnificent landscape, experiencing, no doubt, some of the feelings of Cortez and his companions, when they first caught sight of this enchanting scene. In the afternoon, when the party entered the city, the streets were filled with the luxurious carriages of the wealthy classes, and with gay cavaliers dressed in the national costume, all proceeding to the *Alemeda*, where the *elite* of the capital assembled every afternoon.

The grand square, beautiful in its proportions, the magnificent cathedral, the spacious streets, numerous churches, and substantial dwellings, gave an idea of solid wealth and comfort, and impressed the Commodore with the idea, that here of all others was the place to spend the remainder of his days, far from the intrigues of the petty politicians whom chance or a vitiated public taste had elevated to office in Washington. But after a short sojourn in the Mexican capital, he found that, though fair to view, it contained even more vicious political elements

than the half-fledged city he had left behind him. He now became the guest of Joel R. Poinsett, the United States minister, who it will be recollected, was the representative of the United States in Chili when the Essex was captured, in the port of Valparaiso, at which time a life-long friendship was established between the two men.

After resting for a couple of days from the fatigues of his journey, the Commodore called at the National Palace, and was presented by Mr. Poinsett to President Victoria and his cabinet. His excellency received him with great kindness, and assured him in the most flattering manner, that Mexico would warmly welcome him among her defenders, if he would consent to enter the service of the republic. The president assured him, that he should be appointed commander-in-chief of their little navy, and placed beyond the control of every one, with the rank of general of marine — equivalent to that of admiral — and a compensation adequate to his position, and that in a few months he would receive a further proof of their regard, by the gift of a large tract of land in Texas, by way of compensating him for the position he would give up in the United States navy, and that there were further views with regard to him which would not be made known to him then, but that the Mexican government would leave nothing undone to compensate him for leaving his native country.

These honied assurances were delivered in true Mexican style, by the secretary of state, but had the Commodore understood the character of the people, as well at that time as he did subsequently, he would have declined all their offers and returned at once to the United States. Truthful and honorable himself, he could not, for a moment, believe that the Mexican cabinet was cajoling him with promises which they had no intention of fulfilling. One of the members, Señor Pedrassa, minister of war and marine, had taken ground against Commodore Porter at once outside the cabinet, and opposed him as he did all foreigners who desired to enter the service of the republic. In his opinion Mexico needed no assistance to achieve her independence, and he disliked all North Americans. Lopez, the commandant of marine, was also opposed to him. This person had been for some time in command of the naval forces,

and had shown little ability in their management. He was unwilling to be superseded by an experienced officer, who would probably throw his services into the shade.

The Commodore took ten days to consider the Mexican proposals, and had a hard struggle in deciding to sever the ties which bound him to his native country and become a citizen of another, with whose language and customs he was unfamiliar; but he was highly delighted with all he saw in the beautiful city of Mexico, and its grateful climate (neither too warm nor too cold), and charmed with the attention of the people, who left nothing undone to secure him as one of their defenders. He indulged too, in the hope that here he should find a resting place for himself and family, and perhaps return in a few years to his native land, and with affluence sufficient to make all those dependent upon him comfortable and happy; utopian dreams never to be realized. Within a month after his arrival he found that his advent was not agreeable to a majority of the men in power, but he relied upon the honest old president, and upon the influence of Mr. Poinsett, to clear away all difficulties.

During the time allowed him to accept or reject the proposals of the government, the Commodore enjoyed his excursions around the city and its environs, forming agreeable acquaintances and partaking of the amusements of the Mexicans, who, in spite of their feebleness, seemed to be the happiest people he had ever encountered. A few days sojourn however, satisfied him that for political intrigue, Mexico compared to Washington was as Mount Orizaba compared to a level plain, and it was wonderful how people so ignorant on general topics, should be such masters in intrigue. However, the obstacles with which he now plainly saw he should have to contend, rather whetted his appetite, for he was fond of overcoming difficulties; and within the ten days, he notified the government that he accepted their proposals. The terms were as follows: he was to be commander-in-chief with the rank of general of marine (admiral), to receive a salary of $12,000 per annum, besides perquisites; to have control of the castle of San Juan de Ulloa; to appoint such officers in the navy as he might think proper, and

to remove such as he considered incompetent. His two sons, who had accompanied him to Mexico, were also to receive appointments as midshipmen in the navy. The Commodore accordingly sent in his resignation as captain in the U. S. navy, to take effect August 18th, 1826; and, as soon as it was accepted, he considered himself regularly installed in the Mexican service. Placing his sons at school in the city of Mexico, and bidding the many friends he had made at the capital farewell, he returned to Vera Cruz about the 1st of November — as soon as the yellow fever had abated — to look after his navy.

From the beginning, he met with difficulty in procuring the payment of his salary. The Mexican officials did not, at that time, depend much upon their salaries, which were generally very small, but relied on perquisites *established by themselves.* The customs were loosely collected, and only a small amount of revenue was realized, which was mostly devoted to paying the chiefs of departments, and to paying off the army, which last was unnecessarily large.

On his arrival at Vera Cruz, Commodore Porter found the navy in a very dilapidated condition. It consisted of a small frigate, the Libertad of 32 guns, mostly carronades, the Guerrero, previously mentioned, the Victoria, an old brig mounting 18 eighteen pounders, the Bravo brig of 14 twenty-four pound carronades, the Herman a small hermaphrodite brig of 5 guns, and two small gunboats stationed at Campeache. There was no dock yard of any kind, and the "naval store depot" was undeserving the name, for there were no stores of any kind on hand. The vessels were all in a dismantled condition, and lay under the guns of the fort, like so many old hulks. The few officers of the navy were of the poorest kind, with the exception of three or four English and Americans who had sought service prior to the Commodore's arrival.

The first step was to put the old frigate Libertad in commission, the Commodore living in the fortress of San Juan while the repairs were progressing. When the ship was all ataunto, David H. Porter, late a lieutenant in the United States navy, was appointed to command her, and a crew was selected, by taking the best men from all

the vessels. In the meantime, regulations and general orders were promulgated for the maintenance of system and discipline, and the few Mexican officers that were in the navy, began at once to look upon them as unwarrantable innovations on long established custom. These persons had been taken from coasting vessels, and in some instances from the army, and deserved the appellation of horse marines, rather than that of naval officers. They had not even the faculty of imitation, or something might have been made out of them; but it was hoped that when the Libertad should be completely fitted as a ship of war, that the Mexicans would profit by the example, and endeavor to get their vessels in like condition.

Captain Mechen, the commander of the Victoria, was a fine looking old Mexican, and the only one who seemed disposed to conform to the new regime, but he found it impossible to prevent his officers from playing *monte* on the quarter deck, or smoking in all parts of the ship, wearing their dressing gowns on duty, or sitting in the channels in their shirt sleeves, all matters which of course would not be tolerated in a properly regulated vessel of war.

The money, for which requisition had been made to meet the expenses of the squadron was slowly forthcoming, and when it did arrive, there was so much corruption among the disbursing officers, that only about-two thirds of it reached its proper destination. The experiment was tried of placing American and English officers on board the several vessels, as executives, and Lieut. Hawkins was given command of the Herman. This created quite a commotion, for none of these officers could speak the Spanish language, nor could the Mexicans understand English; but by means of interpreters they managed to get the vessels ready for service, and the Guerrero, under a Mexican captain, put to sea in December, with orders to cruise on the coast of Cuba, and capture and destroy as many Spanish merchant vessels as possible. The Mexican commander accordingly made the best of his way to Pensacola, where he remained at anchor and never performed a particle of service while he retained the command. This officer was next in command to Commodore Porter, and was a person of much influence at headquar-

ters. It was not deemed politic to displace the Mexicans at once from command, incompetent as some of them were. It was desirous to gain their good will, and make them welcome the Americans in a friendly spirit; but it may easily be imagined how difficult it was to conciliate men accustomed to sleep on their watches, leave their vessels without an officer on board, and play cards and smoke cigars on the quarter deck. Such persons naturally looked upon all regulations as irksome, and unnecessary, when the only method that could be adopted to make the navy effective, was to introduce strict discipline and change all their habits.

Up to this time, the Mexican navy had been a rendezvous for idle young men of influential families, who were placed there with no intention of following the sea as a profession, but simply to enable them to wear a gaudy uniform and draw pay from the government, that is whenever the latter could raise money enough to pay them off. These young men led a dissolute life, and it required great restraint to break up their vicious habits, and bring them down to the duties of their profession. This restraint caused extreme dissatisfaction and many complaints, but the government saw plainly that this was the only way to bring discipline into the navy, and ensure the efficiency of its officers, and therefore approved of all the Commodore did.

The first serious violation of the new regulations was duly noticed, and the offender tried by court martial. The accused was a young Mexican of an influential family, who had defied what he called the "American laws," and his dismissal from the service arrayed against the foreigners the animosity of a powerful clique.

One can easily imagine the difficulties that would beset a foreigner entering the service of a country, whose language he did not understand, and whose manners and habits were different from those to which he had been accustomed, and where the anxiety to get to sea rendered it necessary to drive people, to keep them up to their work. Drills and daily exercises were matters to which these people were not accustomed. Their new duties deprived them of pleasures on shore, and bothered the old Mexican captains, who had been accustomed to take things easy, and not to

be disturbed during their noon *siesta*, and while being taught their duties by men who understood their own thoroughly, they considered their instructors tyrants, and the course pursued a reflection upon their ignorance, in which they would have been contented to remain all their lives.

It was late in the spring of 1827, before Commodore Porter could get his vessels to sea. He could not obtain men, and the government, desirous to assist him, sent down a mutinous regiment of soldiers, to be transferred to the navy as sailors, by way of punishment. These were distributed among the different vessels, and efforts made to train them at least at the guns, but their insubordination was beyond description, and not until the *cat* and *colt* were unsparingly dealt out to them, could they be brought into anything like discipline. However, patience and perseverance will conquer in the end, and in the course of time these soldiers became tolerable sailors, yet here were 800 men who had never seen salt water to be depended on to fight the battles of the country against, what was at that time, a powerful navy, well disciplined and well commanded.

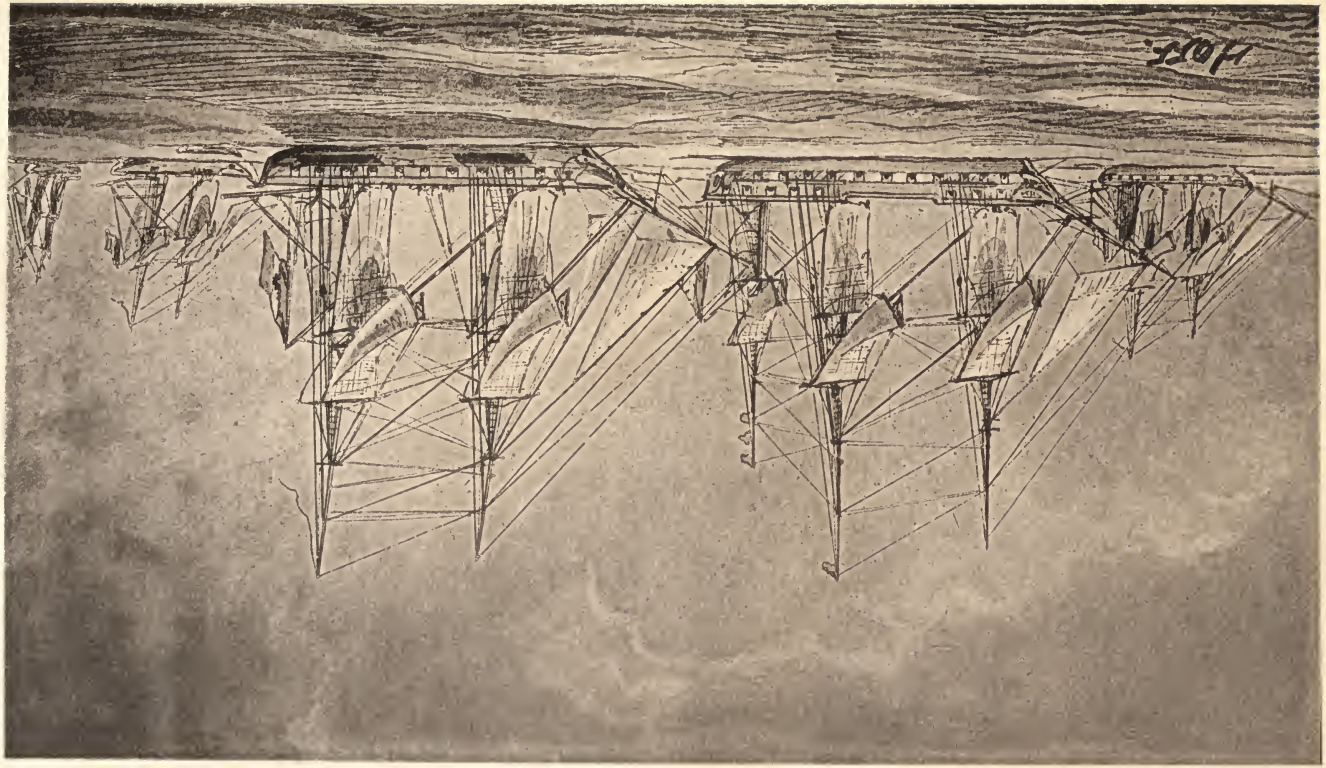
About the end of May, 1827, the squadron, in company with the American corvette John Adams, sailed for Key West, and the third day out encountered a smart *norther* which put all the Mexican mariners *hors du combat.* How the ships got safely through the gale, will always remain a mystery, but they finally arrived off the island of Cuba in a shattered condition. The squadron consisted of the frigate Libertad, brig Victoria, Capt. Machen, brig Bravo, Captain Wise (an American), and the brig Herman, Lieut. Hawkins. The Herman was immediately sent to cruise against Spanish commerce, while the rest of the vessels stood for the port of Havana. When within a hundred miles of the Moro Castle, a sail was made and chase given, and in a short time the stranger was overtaken. She proved to be the Hercules, a fine, large, Spanish merchant brig, loaded with an assorted cargo of the value of $150,000, and bound from Cadiz to Havana. When the Spanish captain was told to haul down his flag, he was thunderstruck, never having heard before that the Mexicans had

any ships of war. The vessel was sent as a prize to Vera Cruz, most of the passengers being transferred to the frigate. Two hours afterwards three sail were made in the direction of Havana, to which chase was given. As the Mexican squadron approached the strangers, the latter proved to be a Spanish squadron, under Commodore Laborde, consisting of the Lealtad and Casilda, sixty gun frigates, and the brig Hercules of 20 guns. The Spaniards were sailing in close order under topsails and courses, the Mexicans running down before the wind approached within five miles of them, then hauled on a wind and reduced the vessels to the same canvass, sailing in the same direction with the enemy. Strange to say, the Spaniards took no notice of them, although they must have known of the sailing of the squadron from Vera Cruz, through the British packet which plied between that port and Havana.

Commodore Porter did not have the right to seek a combat, but he was determined not to decline one. He wished to impress the Mexican officers with confidence, and not give them the opportunity of writing home that he had avoided a conflict with the Spaniards. Had the Guerrero been in company, he would have run down and engaged the enemy, with every probability of success. His men had been well trained at the guns, and there were a sufficient number of American and English seamen on board, to have good captain gunners to every piece.

The squadrons sailed side by side, from 5 P.M. until sunset, when Commodore Porter ordered the helm to be put up, and the vessels run off towards the enemy, who also bore off, but as soon as darkness set in, the Mexican vessels were hauled by the wind and all sail was made, and next day the squadron was snugly anchored inside the sheltering harbor of Tortugas.

In the summer of 1827, the Mexican squadron entered Key West unmolested, there being no Spanish vessels anywhere in sight. They had no sooner been comfortably moored in this snug harbor, than Commodore Laborde appeared with four frigates and three brigs, with the evident intention of blockading them. For several days the enemy kept close into the reef, where their guns could be plainly counted.



The Spaniards had already spread the report in Havana, that the Mexicans had declined their offer of battle, and now some of the American newspapers joined in the cry that Commodore Porter was blockaded in Key West, and was powerless to do the Spaniards any harm, when at that very time the Herman under Hawkins, was off the N. W. coast of Cuba, where she had captured a fine armed schooner with 360 slaves, had destroyed ten coasting vessels under the guns of the Moro, and had sent two fine large schooners loaded with coffee and sugar into Key West. Another brig, the Bravo, slipped out of Key West one night, and took a position in sight of the Moro Castle, where she could capture anything going in or out of Havana, and completely stopping the coasting trade to that port. It was preposterous in the Spaniards to call that a blockade, which never stopped a single Mexican vessel, or their prizes, from going in or out.

Commodore Porter made his head-quarters on board the Libertad, at Key West, whence he directed the movements of his vessels. The Libertad was a slow sailer, badly armed, and not half the size of the Spanish frigates, and therefore entirely unfit to cope with any of them singly. The Commodore being perfectly familiar with all the passages through the Keys, could take any vessel in or out by night or day, and get in his prizes. He had, within thirty days after his arrival in Spanish waters, captured at least $400,000 worth of commerce besides creating a panic and obliging the enemy to keep a large force of vessels together to blockade him. While it took three frigates and three brigs to watch the flagship, the other Mexican vessels could cruise without fear of being attacked. From this, it will be seen how many vessels are required to blockade a single one. It was the old story of the Essex over again, where a large force of the British navy was sent out to catch that one frigate. Commodore Porter would have been very unwise to have abandoned his advantageous position, from which he was carrying on the war with such success. From Key West he sent emissaries to Cuba, to try and impress the native population that it would be for their interest to declare themselves independent of a government that could not protect them.

From this action of Commodore Porter may have been produced the germ of that revolution which has now extended throughout the island, and will ultimately destroy the last vestige of Spanish power in America.

By this time the Mexican squadron had assumed a very creditable appearance. American discipline had brought officers and men up to high water mark, and the mutinous regiment that had marched to Vera Cruz, ornamented with ball and chain, expecting to labor at the galley oar as a punishment for their misdeeds, was now a bright and happy set of sailors. Their once attenuated forms, now presented specimens of manly beauty not to be excelled in any service, and the prison ships had become happy homes to them. Their ration, adopted from that of the United States navy, gave them an abundance of food, such as they had never before dreamed of possessing. In fact, these were their halcyon days, if such days have ever fallen to the lot of Mexicans.

Affairs were in this condition about the last of October, 1827. The Commodore was daily increasing the efficiency of his force by enlisting men in New Orleans, and had added about two hundred prime seamen to the different vessels, besides securing the services of several capital officers. He therefore felt that he could afford to go out and meet Laborde, when the latter had not an unusual force of frigates with him. At about the date last mentioned, all the vessels of the squadron happened to be at Key West, each one having made a successful cruise, and sent in prizes to that place or Vera Cruz, and Commodore Laborde being off the harbor with two frigates and two brigs, Commodore Porter thought he would try to bring about an engagement. The wind was fair out of the harbor, and gave the Mexicans the weather gage, and at 10 A.M., the squadron got under way in handsome style, and stood towards the Spanish ships which were cruising off the port under easy sail; but much to the surprise of every one, the Spanish commodore made signal to his vessels which immediately ran off the wind and crowded on all sail. The Spaniards being fast sailers left the Mexican vessels astern, until the former were hull down, and as Commodore Porter did not wish to lose the advantage of

having a port near him, into which to run in case of being overmatched, he gave up the pursuit.

Commodore Laborde was a brave officer, but a prudent one, and possibly was influenced by similar motives with his antagonist. He steered for Havana, probably wishing to draw the Mexicans to battle in sight of the Moro Castle, where in case of disaster he could run into the harbor, while the Mexicans would be at the mercy of a fresh fleet of vessels that could come out of port and attack them. Next morning the little Mexican fleet again anchored in Key West, and Laborde returned to the blockade with such an increase of force that it would have been madness to meet him.

Finding it impossible to bring on an encounter on any thing like equal terms, Commodore Porter determined to reap all the advantages of his favorable position, until finally the Spanish minister at Washington, complained of his using the place as a rendezvous, from which to operate against Spanish commerce. In answer to this protest, Commodore Porter replied that the Spaniards had the same right to use Key West to operate against Mexican commerce, and that in neither case could it be considered a violation of the neutrality of the port. The United States government, however, wishing to annoy Commodore Porter, ordered a squadron of observation to enquire into the proceedings at Key West, and in March, 1828, the sloops of war, John Adams, Erie and Peacock arrived off the port. Commodore Porter had taken great pains to do nothing that could be construed into a violation of neutrality, and whatever may have been the instructions of the American commander, he certainly made no objections to any thing the Commodore had done, but on the contrary treated him with the greatest cordiality and rejoiced in his apparent good fortune, in holding so good a position, and the success which so far had attended his efforts. It was a meeting of old friends, for among the officers were many of those who had served with or under Commodore Porter, and he could have obtained the services of half of them, had he held out any encouragement for them to enter the Mexican navy; but he did not wish to induce any one to join their fortunes with him, in what he had for

some time considered a doubtful enterprise, since the Mexicans did not afford him the substantial pecuniary aid they had promised.

The American ships of war departed from Key West in a few days, the time of the officers, while they remained, being spent in fraternizing with the Mexicans, and entertaining them on board their respective vessels. Coming in contact with so many of those with whom he had been intimate in the old navy, revived recollections and produced regrets, which he could not conceal; for notwithstanding the injustice with which the Commodore had been treated, his heart clung to his old flag, and he felt painfully the cruel fate that had driven him from beneath its folds. As the American squadron departed, he gazed after them without moving until their sails sank below the horizon, and said with a sigh, "after all it is better to serve in a subordinate position under that flag, than to hold the highest honors in a doubtful and insignificant service like this; and I would advise no man to leave the flag under which he was educated, and to which he is attached, no matter how brilliant the prospects in a foreign navy."

In a letter to a friend written at this time, after alluding to events connected with his command, he says:

"It was hard, dear friend, to be compelled at my age to commence a new career in life, but how could I do otherwise? Let parasites and sycophants say what they will I was treated with undue severity. Punishment of that kind ought not to be inflicted on me for doing what it was my duty to do, for doing that which was applauded by the nation, for doing what? my judges say, "for supporting the honor and dignity of the nation and flag." I could never again harmonize with men who would punish me for doing my duty, nor could I ever again serve with cheerfulness the government that could sanction the sentence. Better for them and me and all that we should part. They lose nothing by the act, why do *they* complain? Is it to cover their own unjustice? Now I have exchanged a certainty for an uncertainty. I was sure, in the United States, of having the esteem of the people for the services I have rendered. I am not so certain of that in Mexico, though I have every motive for endeavoring to deserve it. In a pecuniary point of view I have greatly bettered my condition. I have the entire confidence of, and unrestricted power from the Mexican govern-

ment, but I still make sacrifices in the long separation from family and friends. However, a few more years of activity and usefulness, will, I hope, enable me to seat myself down for the rest of my life, not to indulge in my favorite pursuit, as you call it, of farming, but to vegetate."

"Fixed like a plant to its peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate and rot."

This was the last time the Commodore ever allowed his feelings to get the better of him, so far as to let any one see that he had a feeling on the subject of quitting the United States navy, and this avowal was drawn from him at the sight of the flag he so loved, and under which he had gained his reputation, floating over vessels which a short time previous had been under his command. There is an abiding love for the flag of our country inherent in the breast of every man, and even those who have deserted it, can never lose entirely their natural veneration for the sacred emblem of nationality. The most bigoted of those who once dared to desecrate the flag which floated as the symbol of their country's greatness, who trailed it in the dust and trampled it upon the deck of American merchant vessels, are now seeking permission to honor and defend it. The love for our country's flag is like that of the child for its mother; we may stray from it for a while, but long to return to its protecting folds, and in our last moments we desire it to float over our mortal remains.

The want of money was felt in the squadron, even as early as Feb., 1827, and the Commodore determined to follow his practice in the Pacific and live on the enemy. The commerce of Cuba did not, however, furnish anything like the stores produced by the capture of whale ships, and the most he could do was to sell the sugar and coffee captured in the prizes, at Key West, which for some time enabled him to keep up the outfit of the squadron and pay the officers and men. This course, however, gave dissatisfaction at Vera Cruz, where the government officials were hoping to reap large profits from the plunder of prizes. The brig Hercules, that had already been sent there, had been so completely plucked that she never yielded the captors a single cent, and the other vessels were sold at a

great sacrifice. If the prizes had all been sent to Vera Cruz, the squadron would have been very popular, but when it was reported that the latter was being supported by the sale of captured cargoes, there was an indisposition felt at once to keep it up.

There was a number of romantic episodes connected with this expedition, showing the hair breadth escapes of officers and men in their pursuit of Spanish commerce, and the inefficiency of the Spanish cruisers in protecting the Cuban coast. Two schooners were, on one occasion, brought in as prizes to Key West, loaded with coffee and sugar. These vessels were originally built in Maine, and were what is known as *drogers*. Lieut. Thompson, with twenty-seven men, was ordered to take one of these vessels and go in quest of prizes. He sailed at midnight with a fresh breeze, and hugging the reefs closely and steering some forty miles down the gulf to the eastward, he put about and stood for Matanzas. Here he found the coast clear of vessels of war, and at noon of the next day fell in with a number of coasters keeping close in shore, and bound for Havana. He kept along with them, boarding seven in succession, by running alongside and taking them by surprise, selecting the largest and most heavily laden vessels. He put three men on board each of the prizes with directions to proceed to Key West, and the passengers and crews of the coasters, amounting to one hundred and thirty-seven persons, Lieut. Thompson undertook to guard with only six men, but as the prisoners were all in irons he felt quite secure. Not satisfied with what he had already accomplished, Lieut. Thompson went off the port of Havana, and endeavored to add to his list of prizes, but by some means the prisoners managed to escape from their irons during the night, overpowered the schooner's men, and in a few hours delivered them to the authorities in Havana, who consigned them to the Moro and treated them as pirates, so far as hard fare and close imprisonment were concerned.

The night after the first schooner under Lieut. Thompson disappeared from Key West, the other vessel also departed at midnight, with 27 men under the command of Captain David H. Porter of the Libertad. The crew consisted of two Americans, one Englishman, one Swede and twenty-

three Mexicans, together with an old superannuated Mexican marine officer, and the Commodore's son, the present admiral of the navy. The vessel was about 150 tons burden, comfortable and roomy, but a very dull sailer, having a high after deck loaded with machinery for sugar plantations, and with mahogany logs. At daylight she was about ten miles to the southward of Sand Key light, at the entrance of Key West, when the Spanish squadron was descried standing towards her with a fresh breeze. The squadron consisted of two frigates and a brig, from which there being no escape the captain stood directly for them. There was no American flag on board, but the after run of the vessel being filled with red lead, some stripes were marked on a piece of cotton and the improvised ensign duly hoisted, but the dons considered the schooner too insignificant to notice, and she passed safely between a frigate and the brig without question, the Spaniards not paying her the courtesy of hoisting their colors. Had they examined the schooner through a glass, they would have seen a large fourteen oared launch on her deck which the low bulwarks could not conceal. In an hour the enemy was out of sight, and the schooner steered for Cape Antonio, keeping close in with the Cuban shore, in the hope of picking up prizes on her way. She at length arrived at Cape Corrientes, on the south side of Cuba, and cruised along the coast as far as Broa bay, just south of Havana. There an expedition was fitted out, under the command of the captain, to go in the launch to Batabanoa. They reached their destination at midnight, and found several schooners at anchor awaiting convoy, most of them being filled with coffee and sugar. A train of mules, loaded with coffee, had just arrived. The muleteers were seized and the coffee transferred to the schooners lying at the dock. All the crews of the vessels were secured, and when day broke the astonished inhabitants looked in vain for their schooners and muleteers. In fact, they never again set eyes on their vessels, which were sunk after their cargoes had been transferred to Captain Porter's high deck schooner, which bore the sonorous name of Esmeralda.

The following day the Mexican schooner weighed anchor, and ran for Seguanca bay, in the Isle of Pines, and that night the launch pulled in and captured four more schooners. These were taken out to the Esmeralda, which was loaded until she could hold no more, after which the prizes were sent to the bottom, only one little clipper built schooner being kept for a tender. Some of these prizes were beautiful vessels of from 40 to 150 tons burden, and would have sold well at Vera Cruz, but the order was to "burn, sink and destroy," and the order was carried out so far as the vessels were concerned; but cargo, stores, sails, and cordage were saved for the use of the Mexican squadron. The Esmeralda then cruised to the eastward as far as the town of Cienfuegos, where the launch was sent in at night, and hauled out one schooner partly loaded, which was sunk. The party in the launch also made an expedition on shore, where, we are sorry to relate, the native Mexicans showed their natural disposition by entering private houses, and stealing every thing they could lay their hands on. One fellow took from a gentleman's house a lot of books, thinking thereby to propitiate the commander, who had strictly forbidden pillaging on shore. The same fellow stole a splendid satin embroidered dress, and a fine horse with a silver mounted saddle, which plunder he presented to the captain, himself and companions reserving all the silver spoons and doubloons which they had taken from the house. Suffice to say the horse was permitted to depart with the satin dress, which had been carefully rolled up and secured to the saddle, but the theft of silver was not known until it was too late to make restitution. Captain Porter found that the Mexican sailors were so addicted to plundering that he could not attempt any more land expeditions, and resolving henceforth to confine his operations to the water, he sailed for the Isle of Pines.

Captain Porter was a strict disciplinarian, having been brought up by some of the severest captains in the U. S. navy, men who were more addicted to the use of the cat and colt than to moral suasion. He was not over twenty-one years of age, and had not learned the art of governing men by kindness. He punished for every offense, and the

Mexicans, when away from a ship of war with its surroundings of power, did not fail to commit many acts which it was impossible to pass unnoticed. The carpenter, on board the Esmeralda, was an Englishman named Barret, a most insubordinate fellow, who was constantly being punished for drunkenness. He had ingratiated himself with the Mexican sailors, and was a leading man among them. By working upon their feelings, he made them believe they were badly treated, and finally persuaded them to join him in a scheme for seizing the vessel, killing the captain and officers, and disposing of the cargo in some of the West India ports. It was intended to put this design into execution at the Isle of Pines, or on the way thither. The only arms on board were twenty-five muskets, and an equal number of cutlasses, and these were always under the captain's eye in the cabin, and were only placed in the hands of the crew when an expedition was on foot. The day after leaving Cienfuegos, a merchant ship hove in sight, and supposing her to be a Spaniard the captain armed the crew and ran down to board the stranger, but as she proved to be French, the Esmeralda stood on her course for the Isle of Pines, and the arms were restored to the cabin. Midshipman Porter had charge of the arms, and when they were turned in noticed that two muskets, several cutlasses, and all the bayonets were missing, of which circumstance he immediately informed the captain, also informing him that one Vizetelly, an English boy, had hinted that in less than twenty-four hours they would have a new captain. Captain Porter immediately went on deck, after directing Mid. Porter to stand by the cabin door with his cutlass and pistols, and be ready to hand them to him. When the captain reached the deck he noticed Barret standing forward with a large axe in his hand, surrounded by the Mexicans, to whom he was talking excitedly, frequently pointing towards the quarter deck. The captain called out "Barret, come aft here, you drunken scoundrel." "I am no more a drunken scoundrel than you are," retorted the mutineer, at the same time shouting to the Mexicans "now's our time, follow me," he rushed upon the captain with uplifted axe, followed by the Mexican crew. Midshipman Porter, seeing the

state of affairs, handed the captain his cutlass and pistols, and as Barret approached, he was cut down before he had time to use his axe. The leading Mexican received a shot through the head, and the rest retreated forward, pursued by a huge Swedish quarter master, named Sims, who knocked three or four of them down with his fist. The Mexicans were then ordered aft, and made to stand in line, the captain with his pistol cocked ready to shoot the first man that moved. On examination, all were found to be armed with the missing bayonets, which they had concealed down their backs. After the mutineers had been put in irons, there were left only the quarter master, Sims, and two Americans to work the vessel, and this affair put a stop to any further inroads upon Spanish commerce.

Instead of continuing on to the Isle of Pines, Capt. Porter ran for the Mangles islands, then in sight, and entering one of the little nooks (a former retreat of pirates), he hid his vessel among the mangroves, where no one would ever think of looking for her. The question now was, what to do with his twenty-four desperate characters. The captain knew that if he landed them on these islands they must inevitably starve to death, and he therefore hit upon an expedient which placed them entirely under his inspection. Two holes for each man were sawed through the high deck of the schooner, on each side of the carline over the cabin. The prisoners' feet were put through these holes, and the irons put upon them below. Thus there were forty-eight feet protruding into the cabin through the deck, and no one could meddle with the irons without the knowledge of the captain. This was a simple expedient, but a very happy one—at least for the officers, and in this condition the Esmeralda made her way back to Key West, where she passed in through the Spanish squadron, which took no notice of her, and presented Commodore Porter with a cargo worth $56,000. The cargo was sold in Key West, and again the squadron was in funds. The mutineers were tried by court martial, and punished through the fleet, and afterwards sent to work on the fortress of San Juan de Ulloa.

There is no knowing what devastation the old Esmeralda would have committed on the Cuban coast, but for the unexpected termination of her cruise. As it was, in less than a month, she captured and destroyed about one hundred thousand dollars worth of property.

Winter was now approaching, and the northers began to set in very heavily, and as there was no use in attempting operations at that season, Commodore Porter determined to return to Vera Cruz, with his squadron and prizes. Besides, he did not wish the United States government to raise any points, with regard to his making Key West a base of operations, as he could direct the movements of vessels equally well from Vera Cruz. The principal advantage he derived from his stay in Key West was, that the Spaniards were obliged to keep the larger part of their force *blockading* him. Previous to leaving for Vera Cruz, about March 1st, 1827, he visited New Orleans in a pilot boat chartered for the occasion, where he was publicly received by the authorities and people, a circumstance at which he felt greatly flattered. At New Orleans he made arrangements to have men sent him to Vera Cruz, as his original sailors had nearly served their time, having enlisted for only one year.

On the Commodore's return to Key West, he gave the order to be ready to sail at a moment's notice. All the vessels except the Guerrero were then in port, and Commodore Laborde was more attentive than usual to the blockade. He had three frigates and three brigs on watch close into the reef. The morning after sailing orders were issued, not one of the Mexican vessels was to be seen in Key West, much to the surprise of the Spaniards. When the moon went down, the squadron got under way, and stood out of the north passage, at that time imperfectly surveyed and known only to the wreckers, and one or two other persons, among them Commodore Porter, who led his squadron safely through. The wind was blowing fresh from the westward, and all sail was carried to place a wide distance between the Mexicans and the Spaniards. At daylight the fleets were 91 miles apart. The Spanish Commodore did not attempt pursuit, and in the course of ten days the Mexican fleet reached Vera Cruz without molestation.

The Commodore had no reason to be dissatisfied with his reception by the Mexican authorities. They approved of everything he had done, and promised all manner of aid in carrying on future operations. He had drawn on them but once during his absence, and then for but $50,000, the sale of prizes having kept him supplied with funds. This however, was a source of regret to the Mexicans on shore, who all wished to share in the distribution of prize money.

The Commodore did not find them well pleased when he called for the return of the prize money which he had spent for the maintenance of the squadron. He met with vexatious delays, and many questions were raised with regard to the accounts, and the money was only paid in small installments. The American seamen, dissatisfied with their small allowance of prize money, refused to reenlist, their times being out, and without them the squadron would be worth nothing.

The Commodore now began to experience the difficulties he had been anticipating. The minister of war and marine was opposed to all his measures, and he was at that time the most powerful member of the cabinet. The officers received their pay very irregularly, and the Commodore's family in the United States suffered much inconvenience. He had left some obligations behind him, which he calculated to settle upon receipt of his allowance from the Mexican government, and to discharge these debts, he was obliged to sacrifice by a forced sale, his place near Washington, for one-third of its value. In the meantime, the Mexican authorities were profuse in promises, and treated the Commodore with marked kindness, granting him a tract of land of thirty square leagues on the Rio Grande, which he had exchanged for a grant on the Guatzacolcos river, on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, amounting to about 372,000 acres. This land extended along the river nearly to Minatitlan, and being granted for military services and no act of settlement required, it stands good to this day, although the Mexican government have given a dozen grants since that time of the same tract to others.

Commodore Porter's command included, besides the navy, the castle of San Juan de Ulloa. Whoever held that fort commanded Vera Cruz, and the receipts from the cus-

toms provided they desired to interfere with them. The chiefs of parties in Mexico were always agitating for revolution, and were anxious to get rid of one, upon whom they could not depend to enter into their nefarious schemes. They sounded him to see how far he could be used, but finding him determined to support the government under all circumstances, they proposed to limit his authority by placing a Mexican in command of the Castle of San Juan, outside the control of the navy. This change would, in effect, have controlled the navy, the ships being fastened to the castle and right under the muzzles of its guns, which he would not submit to. The intrigues in the city of Mexico, not being to the Commodore's taste, he visited the capital but seldom, passing most of his time in Vera Cruz trying to get his vessels to sea. He had sent the Bravo and Herman back to the Cuban coast, where they inflicted considerable damage on the coasting trade. The brig Guerrero was now fitted out anew, with a picked crew of three-fourths English and American seamen, and one-fourth of the best Mexicans, and a picked guard of Mexican marines. Captain David H. Porter was appointed to the command, a very clever English officer named Williams, first lieutenant, an American, Vanstavern, second lieutenant, the rest made up of the best Mexican officers that could be selected. There were several of the midshipmen Americans, among them the admiral's son.

The Guerrero sailed about the middle of March, 1828, with instructions to pursue the same course which had been tried in the Esmeralda, and having fair winds she arrived off the coast of Cuba, towards the latter part of the month. The day previous to making the land, an American brig was boarded, the master of which informed Capt. Porter that there were two frigates in Havana, dismantled, and the only vessel ready for sea was the brig Hercules, and that he might go off the harbor with perfect impunity. In consequence of this information, he steered for Little Mariel, a fine port fifteen miles to the westward of Havana. It was his intention to run the coast up, pass Havana at night, and catch the coasters coming from the eastward with the sea breeze, also to fall in with convoys coming from Bahia Honda, and ports to the westward.

In those days there was an extensive trade from the different Cuban ports to Havana, and as many as sixty or seventy vessels at a time might be seen working their way along to the great depot of sugar, coffee, and tobacco. It was a lovely morning when the Guerrero made the island, standing on a wind for the port of Mariel, when within about ten miles of the land, the look out from aloft reported a large convoy, with two brigs of war beating up the coast. On approaching nearer, the convoy was found to consist of forty-two vessels, and one of the brigs mounted 18 guns, the other 8 in broad side, and one long gun. The two together were superior to the Guerrero by three guns, and the advantage was still greater from the fact of the force being distributed in two vessels. Nevertheless, the captain concluded to attack them, and get possession of the convoy. All sail was carried to close with them, and the Guerrero cleared for action. The Spaniards seemed indisposed to meet the Mexican brig in the open sea, but put their helms up, and ran into the port of Little Mariel — which was protected by a fort — the convoy following. It was the intention of Captain Porter to follow them in, but when he got within six hundred yards of the entrance, the water shoaled suddenly, and he put his helm down, came head to wind and anchored, leaving his topsails on the cap. The Guerrero's position was now a very good one, there was only a low narrow strip of land between her and the enemy, not sufficient to cover their water line, and he had a better chance to attack than if he had been inside.

In the meantime, the Spaniards had shown great diligence in getting their vessels into good position close together, in a line with each other, with springs on their cables, and had opened a raking fire on the Guerrero as she stood head on, cutting her up aloft but doing no material damage to the hull. Capt. Porter coolly anchored under this heavy fire, and then deliberately opened on the enemy with great effect.

When the Guerrero stood in, those on board had not noticed a Martello tower, mounting one or two long guns which defended the entrance of the harbor, but they were soon made aware of its existence, as it opened a sharp fire

on the brig, every shot telling on the hull or spars. Two guns were assigned to attend to this battery, while the rest were directed towards the Spanish vessels. It was soon apparent that the Guerrero's fire was too heavy for the enemy, whose exertions began to slacken, and in a a few minutes more the battle would have ended, and the Mexicans would have brought all their guns to bear upon the fort; but just when the Captain was most sanguine of success, a shot from the latter struck the hemp cable and cut it in two, when the Guerrero drifted rapidly astern, and struck on a rock where she laid for some minutes apparently fast aground; but sail being made on her with great rapidity (her guns still keeping up their fire), she cast to seaward and went all clear, the Spaniards raking her as she stood off, and cheering lustily at her supposed retreat.

The port anchor was now got ready for letting go, and Captain Porter stood in again to the attack. In the meantime the Spanish brigs had repaired some of their damages, and together with the fort opened a heavy raking fire on the Guerrero, as she stood in to renew the conflict. This time Captain Porter anchored four hundred yards more to windward, with his topsails up and the yards braced to cast to port, in case of a similar accident to his cable. All this time the enemy were firing rapidly, most of the shot striking the spars, sails and rigging. The shot from the fort almost always struck the hull, but their powder was evidently bad, as the missiles did not go through the brig's side, otherwise they would have inflicted much damage.

The action since last anchoring, had continued about twenty minutes. The smaller Spanish brig had struck her colors or they had been shot away, and the fire of her companion was very feeble. Both vessels had suffered greatly in spars and hull. Every shot from the Guerrero that missed the vessels of war, struck among the convoy which was packed so close inshore of the brigs that they could not avoid the missiles. Several of them were sunk and all their crews sought safety on shore. Had shells been in use at that time all the vessels would have been set on fire and destroyed. Another ten minutes would have decided the battle in favor of the Mexicans, when the Guer-

rero's port cable was cut in two by another shot, and the wind being fresh the brig cast to port and stood out again, receiving but one raking shot from the fort which cut off part of her rudder. The sheet anchor was now got ready to let go, but before standing in again, damages aloft had to be repaired. Both top gallant masts, spanker gaff, flying jib boom, and jib halliards had been shot away. New braces had to be rove and the wreck cleared, which consumed about three-quarters of an hour. There were many other minor damages, for the Spaniards had fired high, and most of their shots had struck the spars, sails, or rigging.

Between Little Mariel and Havana was a fine road, and couriers had been dispatched to the city, announcing the presence of the Guerrero, which the Spanish admiral believed to be still in Vera Cruz. The guns could be plainly heard in Havana, and the Spaniards hastily prepared to put to sea. The Lealtad, a 64 gun frigate, just refitted was lying with sails unbent, and rigging unrove. Her men were summoned on board at once, with part of those from the Casilda frigate. Every available boat was now put in requisition, and the Lealtad towed out to sea, which was an easy matter as there was no wind, and the surface of the ocean was as smooth as a mirror. The Spaniards worked with a will, and lost not a moment; for while the boats were towing, the sails were bent, the rigging rove, and the batteries got in order. When the Lealtad was within ten miles of little Mariel, the sea breeze set in quite freshly and the boats ceased towing. The frigate, now under full sail, made rapid progress towards the Mexican brig, which had hauled off for repairs, on account of her cable being cut; when, just as the Guerrero was again standing in to finish the affair under sail, the top gallant sails and royals of the Spanish ship were discovered rapidly rising above the horizon. In half an hour her hull was fairly in sight. Captain Porter, to his great regret, was now obliged to run for it, and accordingly filled away to the northward under such sail as he could get up. The heads of both fore and main topmasts were shot away, and it was impossible to get up topgallant masts for some time, until a pair of stump masts were lengthened on the heel, swayed aloft

and lashed to the topmast below the eyes of the rigging, then the topgallant yards were swayed aloft and the sails set. The Spanish frigate was by this time within four miles of the brig, but when all sail was set on the latter she left the Spaniard behind, at the rate of a mile an hour, so that at sunset Captain Porter felt himself quite safe. At night fall he changed his course several times, and finally seeing nothing of the Lealtad he determined to return to Little Mariel, and cut the two brigs out with his boats. He had accordingly steered south for about an hour, when the frigate was made out close on board, at the same instant she opened her broadside and the shot rattled among the brig's spars and rigging, doing some damage; the latter tacked ship and hauled on the wind again to the northward, and the enemy was again lost sight of.

Capt. Porter now made all sail in the direction of Key West, not expecting to see the frigate again; but at daylight she was descried, well to windward, running down for the brig, of which it appears she had never lost sight, having been able, by means of good night glasses, to follow her movements.

Escape now seemed impossible, and the Guerrero was prepared for action. The frigate, under all steering sails, rapidly approached, while the brig was kept close hauled intending to cross her bow. When the Lealtad was within three-quarters of a mile, the Guerrero poured in a broadside directed at her sails and spars, which committed great havoc, the light steering sails coming down by the run. At the same moment the brig tacked and poured in a second broadside with good effect. The Spaniards, though taken by surprise, managed their ship beautifully, came to the wind with squared yards, opened their broadside, and took in the remaining steering sails in good order, then filled away on the same course with the brig. All this did not consume more than five minutes, although it seems longer in the relation.

The battle now commenced in earnest, and continued for an hour, the two vessels running side by side, half a mile distant from each other, when the wind allowed the Guerrero to close within a hundred yards for a few minutes. Her broadsides were so destructive, that the Spaniards

decreased their fire considerably, and for a moment it was thought that the frigate would haul off, but at that instant the wind fell calm below, while there was enough aloft to catch the Lealtad's light sails, leaving the brig with her sails torn to tatters. The frigate now took a position out of the reach of the Guerrero's short guns, and there laid for nearly an hour, boring the brig through and through, until her deck was like a slaughter pen. The Mexican vessel was unmanageable, masts, sails, and hull being a perfect wreck, and even at the greatest elevation, not a shot could reach the Spaniard. Under these circumstances the captain called the officers together, and expressed to them the pain he felt at being obliged to haul down his flag, but felt it his duty to do so, in which they all agreed, and the colors were hauled down after an action of one hour and forty minutes. The moment the Spaniards saw that the brig had surrendered, the frigate ran down for her, keeping up a constant fire, and when right abeam and close aboard, she poured in a whole broadside, which cut the Guerrero almost to pieces, killing and wounding a number of the officers and men, and cutting the gallant Captain Porter in two with a twenty-four pound shot. This last act of barbarity was to punish the brig for her stubborn resistance, and to show to the people of Havana how much damage the Lealtad had inflicted on her.

The Spanish frigate was much cut up in masts, spars, hull, and rigging, but sailors were immediately sent over the side to cover shot holes with tin, and paint them black to conceal the injury. New sails were bent, the rigging knotted and set up, and in five or six hours the damages were in a measure repaired, so that to the uninitiated, the frigate looked in perfect order and as if she had been sailing on a summer sea.

The Guerrero was not boarded until four hours after she surrendered, and then boats filled with armed men went alongside, and the Spaniards swarmed over her decks like a gang of pirates, every man bent on plunder. The officer in command immediately demanded the chronometers and the key of the strong box, while the crew were seizing on the personal property of the sailors. The Mexican officers were hustled out of the brig, minus every-

thing but what they stood in, and the next morning the Lealtad, with a fresh breeze, stood into Havana with the brig in tow, amid the applause of thousands who had assembled to exult over the capture of a 22 gun brig by a 64 gun frigate! little dreaming that the blood of those martyrs to liberty, who fell on board the Guerrero would sow the seed of republicanism throughout Cuba, until the flag they were lauding to the skies, should be driven from the island.

The body of the gallant Porter was thrown overboard, without even the form of a funeral service, for though only a few hours from port, they could not honor such bravery as his by a burial on shore. It would not have been politic even at that time, for thousands of those who honor the gallant dead would have followed the Captain's body to the grave, and the government did not want any excitement to fan into flame the smouldering embers of liberty. They did all that they could to depreciate the battle, but the intelligent portion of the community could see that it had been one of the most desperate engagements on record, and that the frigate had suffered as much as the brig. The latter lost in killed, wounded and missing about 80 out of 186. Three of her officers were killed, and all the others more or less wounded. The surviving officers were transferred to the guard ship, near the entrance to the harbor, where they were well treated — considering who were their captors — and a parole was offered to Midshipman Porter which he declined to accept, preferring to share the captivity of his shipmates.

The news of the capture of the Guerrero caused great excitement in Mexico, and much enthusiasm was manifested at the gallantry displayed on the occasion; but when the enthusiasm cooled off the Mexicans remembered that they had lost a vessel which cost them $180,000, and that the Spaniards were that much better off. "What did they fight for?" queried the men in power; "their object was to destroy commerce, they should have avoided an engagement." They did not consider that the laurels gained for the nation strengthened her claims to independence, by showing her power to maintain it. But the Mexicans were not a deep thinking people, nor did they act on the

broad principles of making any sacrifices to gain their independence. When the reaction set in, even the gallant Porter, who was buried beneath the waves, was found fault with, for not whipping a sixty-four gun frigate. "We pay those North Americans to fight," said the Mexicans, "they ought to whip everything. The Mexicans could do better; the Mexicans on board did all the fighting," and so on *ad nauseam*.

This blow for a season checked the Mexican naval operations, with the exception of fitting out the Bravo under Wise and the Herman under Hawkins. This last named officer was a handsome fellow, and a great favorite with the ladies. His vessel was chased into Nassau, New Providence, where he had a love affair and killed a man, in consequence of which he was imprisoned for some months, while the Herman was laid up in port and her services lost during all that time. The Bravo, in the meanwhile, was so closely watched by the Spanish forces, that she could seldom get out of port to do any damage.

In the year 1828, there was an accession to the Mexican navy, the ship of the line Asia. She was a vessel of the Spanish navy, whose crew had revolted at some port on the Pacific, and turned her over to the Mexicans, who had sent her to Vera Cruz. In the then condition of the Mexican treasury, this addition to the navy was a disadvantage, as it required a considerable sum to keep her moored in port and prevent her from going to decay, which sum would equip a good sized vessel to cruise against the Spaniards.

The Commodore made the Asia his head-quarters, and with a csmall crew endeavored to make her appearance inspire the Mexicans with some respect for their navy, but without avail. They were not a naval people, had no commerce of any consequence, and their harbors were defended by forts, against which the Spaniards would not venture an attack, or they were protected by dangerous bars which no vessel of any size could pass. The Spaniards could not hope to land troops in Mexico, for they would have been easily defeated by the Mexicans, who were better soldiers and far more numerous. The policy of the Mexicans was, therefore, to shut themselves up and only

fight the Spaniards when the latter attempted a landing on their shores.

By this time, Commodore Porter was convinced that the Mexicans possessed few of the elements of a great people, and that their only chance of maintaining their independence lay in the difficulty of access to their ports, and that they would succumb to an energetic foe the first time one should enter the country. All his opinions have since been fully confirmed, as well as the evils resulting from divisions among their public men, all aiming at supreme power, from the corruption pervading all departments of the government, and from the ignorance and indolence of the mass of the people, who knew nothing and desired to do nothing except enjoy themselves. Had our revolutionary forefathers possessed such a country as Mexico, with its genial climate, unbounded resources, inaccessible mountain passes, and inhospitable coast, they might have defied the world in arms; but there were few of the Mexicans who were imbued with the spirit of the men of 1776, and one of the besetting sins of the people was, hostility to the foreigners who were fighting their battles.

In these remarks it is not meant to detract from the good qualities which the Mexican *people* really possessed, their hospitality, and kindness of disposition, but our strictures more properly apply to those who held the reins of power, and their dependants, the army of office holders. There was no doing anything with this party, in the way of obtaining funds for the support of the navy, for although there was plenty of money in the country, every office holder wanted to secure it for his own private benefit. The naval officers and men received their pay at long intervals, and that of the commander-in-chief was far in arrears. When he complained of the pittance he received, they proffered him a grant of land as worthless as their promises.

During the early part of the year 1828, the Mexican government issued a decree expelling all Spanish subjects, and particularly priests who were *cachupinos*, from the country. The fear of personal violence from the populace induced many Spaniards to hurry from Mexico, carrying with them all their effects, and what was still worse,

depriving the country of a useful class of inhabitants, for many of the old Spaniards were good merchants and men of wealth and influence. The laity sent off their personal property privately, but many of the priests, considering that their sacred profession would be a safe guard to them, undertook to travel with whatever effects they possessed, thus showing themselves very unfamiliar with the people among whom they lived. They were depleted of a portion of their goods on the road to the coast, but met with their worst treatment after reaching Vera Cruz.

At that time Col. Santa Anna was governor of Vera Cruz, and was notorious for his love of cock fighting and other forms of gambling, a circumstance that did not make him a very good example for the youth of the community, and did not contribute to strengthen his authority to preserve good order among the citizens. When it was known that the priests had arrived in the city, bringing with them considerable wealth, a plot was arranged to deprive them of it; the excuse being, that they had conveyed away many things belonging to the churches. One night the city was thrown into great excitement, a tremendous uproar was heard in the streets. The Commodore sent a messenger on shore to ascertain what was the matter, who soon returned with the information that the populace was pursuing the priests from one end of the city to the other. He immediately sent word to Col. Santa Anna, that if these outrages were not stopped he would send his marines to protect the priests, and no attention being paid to this, the Commodore did send a guard to escort them to the naval vessels, and as soon as arrangements could be made, placed them on board vessels bound to Havana, New Orleans, and New York, and saw them safe out of the country.

The Mexicans considered this action of the Commodore's a high handed invasion of their rights, and he became at once the object of popular displeasure; but he nevertheless, did not lessen his efforts to secure all the Spaniards against oppression, and finally succeeded in getting them safe out of the country at the expense of being called *cachupino* by the populace.

Santa Anna was not a man to forget what he considered an indignity, and though apparently extremely friendly to the Commodore, and to the Americans, it was hinted to the latter that they had made an inveterate enemy. This was not considered remarkable, for it required very little to obtain the enmity of one of these officials, and for an American to interfere in any matter where a native was concerned, was provocation sufficient.

About three months after the above event, Col. Santa Anna sent an officer on board the flag-ship to inform the Commodore that a courier had just arrived from the city of Mexico, with orders from the government for him "to repair at once to the capital," that important movements were on foot and that his presence was imperatively necessary. The Commodore was much surprised that no written dispatch was sent, but was told that a confidential officer was the bearer of the message, showing that the urgency of the case admitted of no delay. Upon the following morning, he applied to Santa Anna for an escort, as the road to the capital was infested with robbers; but the colonel had left the city taking the only escort with him, so that the second in command had no means of complying with the request without sending to Jalapa for cavalry. Finding that this would delay him for several days, the Commodore determined to proceed to Jalapa without an escort, as the robbers seldom attacked parties in the *Tierra Caliente* as the low country between Vera Cruz and Jalapa was called.

On the day after the summons reached him, he started on horseback, accompanied by the fleet surgeon, Dr. Boardman, and a Mexican boy as a servant, with a pack horse to carry their luggage and provisions. The Commodore and the surgeon were each armed with a pair of pistols and a sword, and the boy carried the Commodore's favorite double barrelled gun loaded with buckshot. At sunset the party rested at a small *rancho*, and next morning continued on their way to Jalapa. They had now the choice of two roads, one short and hilly, the other longer but more agreeable, and choosing the latter had advanced about ten miles, when a Mexican came riding rapidly by crying out "*ladrones vienen señores tenga vmd*

quedou !" (" robbers coming gentlemen, look out"), and at the same instant four horsemen came in sight approaching very fast. The Commodore's party drew up on one side of the road to let them pass, supposing they were in pursuit of the flying Mexican, but at the same time had their arms all ready for use, which proved to be a wise precaution, for the Mexicans drew rein right in front of them, and the leader, pointing to the gold embroidered belt which sustained the Commodore's sword exclaimed " aquel con el cinturon de oro es el hombre." (" That man with the embroidered belt is the one.") The robbers commenced firing their pistols at the distance of almost twenty-five paces, whereupon, as quick as thought, the Commodore leveled his pistol at the leader of the brigands and shot him dead. His second shot struck the horse of one of the assailants in the throat, and the animal fell on his rider, who lay unable to extricate himself, while his two remaining companions put spurs to their horses and fled, like the wind, in the direction from which they had come. Dr. Boardman had fired his pistols as quickly as possible, but not being so good a shot as his chief, only struck one of the horses without disabling him ; but the Commodore discharged both barrels of the shot gun after the retreating robbers, and as one of them reeled in his saddle, it was hoped that he was badly injured. The Commodore never before won a battle in so short a space of time, for the action did not last five minutes from the time of the first appearance of the assailants on the scene. The party now dismounted to examine into the condition of the robber, whose horse had fallen upon him, and at the same time to secure the steed of the dead man which stood quietly by the body of his master. The living robber was not materially injured, but could not extricate himself from beneath the body of his horse; he managed to draw his sword, and commenced showering upon the Americans all the curses and vile epithets known to the Castilian language. It was the intention of the Commodore to take this ruffian prisoner to Jalapa, but every time any one went near him he made such desperate cuts at them, that it was found impossible to secure him without first getting possession of his sword. Dr. Boardman undertook to disarm the man, saying that it was

altogether a surgical operation and that he knew exactly where to cut him to make him drop his weapon, and would injure him very little. Cautiously approaching the desperate villain the doctor endeavored to cut him slightly on the biceps muscle, but the miscreant defended himself so vigorously that the surgeon, more expert with the lancet than with the sword, could not reach him, till in an unguarded moment coming too near, the robber dealt him a blow slicing off his elbow joint and the sword dropped from his hand. The robber fairly shrieked at his success and shouted, "come on you *carrajo* Americanos," but the Commodore determined to trifle no longer gave him a shot through the head which terminated his career.

The doctor's wound was exceedingly painful, but after binding it up as well as they could, the party proceeded to Jalapa, leaving the dead robbers in the road, but carefully securing their horses, arms, and equipments. On reporting this affair to the governor of Jalapa, soldiers were sent to bring in the bodies for identification, while the Commodore was told to keep the horses, as they were prize of war; so the animals, arms, and equipments, were sold and netted seventy-five dollars prize money, which was the first installment on that account, which he had received since he entered the service of the Mexican republic.

After this affair was over it was remembered how anxious the officer in command at Vera Cruz had been to get the Commodore off, and the many excuses he made for not furnishing a military escort, and it was plain that there was some treachery at the bottom of it. The same night a party of Mexicans coming into Jalapa, stated that seven mounted men had been encountered at the junction of the two roads, and after consultation three had taken one road and four the other, and the two who were killed were of the latter party. Had the whole seven gone on the road the Commodore traveled, matters might have turned out very differently. The latter hinted to the governor of Jalapa that Santa Anna was at the bottom of the attack, but whether this was the case or not, could never be ascertained. No doubt the robbers were military men in disguise, who had started in pursuit of the Commodore some

time after his leaving Vera Cruz, expecting to overtake his party before it reached the diverging roads, in which expectation being disappointed, there was nothing left them but to divide their forces and assassinate him before reaching Jalapa, where they knew he would take an escort.

No one could or would recognize the dead men, and no inquiry into the circumstances of their death was made, especially as it was known that the Commodore was hastening to the capital, in obedience to orders. The life of a man was not considered of much consequence at that time, especially that of a robber. The party remained but one day in Jalapa, and then continued their journey with a strong escort, Dr. Boardman in a litter on account of his wound, and reached the capital without farther adventure.

When the Commodore reported to the government in obedience to his orders, he was much surprised to find that he had not been sent for at all, and that the whole affair was an act of treachery, yet to be fathomed. The authorities were equally surprised and annoyed at the circumstances, as related by the Commodore, and promised to leave nothing undone to bring the perpetrators to justice. But Mexico, at that time, was a safe place for these marauders, who were to be found in every portion of the country, as well in the cities, in the passes of the Pinal, as in the tortuous roads of the Orizaba mountains, and their retreats were as difficult to follow as the windings of the labyrinth of the minataur, from which Theseus escaped by following the clue of a silken cord.

Whatever steps the government ever pursued to find out the origin of this scheme of assassination, it is certain that nothing was discovered, and the Commodore had only the satisfaction of knowing, that some one was in pursuit of his life, and that he would have to depend upon his own vigilance and courage to protect it. After a short sojourn in the city of Mexico, he returned to Vera Cruz, where Santa Anna was the first to congratulate him on his escape, and the swift retribution he had dealt out to his assailants. Santa Anna also presented him with a splendid sabre, as a mark of esteem,

and was very active in the attempt to discover the instigators of the attack. However, in spite of all exertions, the matter remains a mystery to this day.

Soon after this affair, the Commodore's son Thomas was taken down with yellow fever, and after a painful illness, departed this life, to the great grief of his sorrowing father, for this was his favorite child, in whom his heart was wrapped up. He was a beautiful boy of eleven years of age, full of promise. His other son had been sent to the United States, to be educated, and his nephew having been killed in the Guerrero, the Commodore was left without a relative near him. His secretary, Mr. Law, had also returned to the United States, leaving him with few associates whom he cared for. The illusions, which for a time had buoyed him up, were all dispelled one after another, and he saw no hope of creating anything like a permanent navy in Mexico. The government now owed him twenty thousand dollars, which he saw no likelihood of getting, except by taking grants of land of which he was already the proprietor of a large tract on the isthmus of Tehuantepec. He went to the isthmus with Senor Tadeo Ortiz, and had his grant surveyed and the title established and acknowledged, hoping that at some future day it would be a fortune to his children.

In 1827, he thought he saw the necessity of an interoceanic communication, and he was even then impressed with the superior advantages of the Tehuantepec route, for a ship canal, over all others. He says "any one looking at a map will see the advantage to the United States, of a ship canal at this point, over all others, to bring our commerce within easy reach of the Pacific coasts, without having to make the dangerous and tedious passage around Cape Horn." It was not for the benefit of *the civilized world*, that the Commodore anticipated the day when a canal would be opened, but for the *commerce of the United States*. "The Guatzacualcos is but 700 miles from the mouth of the Mississippi, which drains a country capable of supplying the world with provisions. It is but 480 miles from our Texan frontier, and must eventually fall into the American union. The gulf included between Florida and Yucatan is, nine months of the year, as quiet as a lake, on which

even our river steamers might safely voyage, and carry the products of our country as far south as Valparaiso, and as far north as Oregon; and offering a voyage to sea steamers and sailing vessels to China, of about half the distance, around the cape of Good Hope. These were the advantages which the Commodore thought he saw in the future, when our commerce should whiten every part of the ocean. He knew that he should not live to see all this realized, but expected that his immediate descendants would. From a careful survey that he made of the bar of the Guatzacualcos, he ascertained that it had not changed within the memory of man, and that the upper stratum of the bottom, was composed of hard clay, which once excavated would remain unchanged, and that an excavation of only five hundred feet would be sufficient to make a safe channel for the largest ships.

Surveys and scientific calculations have long since proved the availability of this route for a ship canal, most of the necessary excavation being over a level country, with but a short distance through mountains, which supply sufficient water to fill the canal. The proposed routes, via Panama, San Juan river, and the Atrato are mainly for the benefit of the world at large and would be of no advantage to us, while the Tehuantepec route is almost within our domain, and would serve more particularly for the commerce of the United States, which could always control it as it would be almost under our guns. These were the reasons for locating his great grant of land on the Guatzacualcos, where a ship crossing the bar, can carry deep water within a short distance of Minatitlan, and whose entrance offers as good a harbor as is to be found on this continent.

The Commodore erected saw mills, on the Guatzacualcos, for the purpose of getting out mahogany, and other valuable woods, but having no time to give his personal attention to these matters they produced no beneficial results.

The year 1829 came around, and General Jackson had been inaugurated president, and with old Hickory Commodore Porter's friends again came into power. The president elect was also his warm friend, and, satisfied of the injustice of the court martial towards him, disapproved

of its sentence. He had himself been placed in a somewhat similar position when he took possession of Florida, and could fully appreciate the motives which governed Commodore Porter in his action at Foxardo. Jackson had no sooner assumed the duties of president, than he invited the Commodore through his friends to return to the United States, assuring him that he should receive full justice for all the wrongs done him by the late administration.

In reply to this invitation the Commodore made known his situation, and the embarrassment he labored under owing to the treachery of the Mexican government, and the longing he felt to be once more under the protection of his country's flag. At the same time he stated, that he could never return until assured that he could be placed in a position that would enable him to triumph over his enemies, and be satisfied that he received it with the approbation of the American people.

To show the feelings which animated President Jackson, in regard to the Commodore, we insert the following letter from the Honorable Mahlon Dickerson, afterwards secretary of the navy.

Suckasunny, Morris Co., New Jersey, March 30, 1829.

Dear Sir: Soon after General Jackson's arrival at Washington, I put into his hand a copy of your letter to me, of December last, on the reading of which, as I am informed, he was much agitated. I also wrote to him my sentiments, and views upon the subject at his request.

In consequence of the immense press upon him, I was not able to have any conversation in private with him till the 17th instant, when I dined with him and was with him alone for an hour or more. After having expressed the highest respect for your character and services, and his utter detestation of the persecution that drove you into exile, he authorized me to say to you, that it would afford him the highest satisfaction to see you again in this country, and that should you return he would as soon as circumstances would permit, provide for you in some way agreeably to yourself.

You must be aware that he has no power to recall any person that has left the country, and it is possible there may be some difficulties as to citizenship which he as well as congress will be disposed to remove as soon as possible. How far you have expatriated

yourself I do not know. Lafayette and other French officers who served in our revolutionary war, never lost any of their rights as subjects of the king of France.

The sooner you arrive here, the sooner you will be in a situation to please you. Of the cabinet, Eaton you know is your devoted friend, Van Buren is equally attached to you, and Ingham, Branch and Berrian are friendly to you; but none of them more attached to you than the president himself. Everything here promises you the most favorable reception, and I hope that as soon as your convenience will permit, we may have the pleasure of seeing you among us.

I am with great respect and esteem

Sincerly yours,

MAHLON DICKERSON.

Commodore David Porter,
Of the Mexican Navy, Vera Cruz.

This letter was both consoling and flattering to the Commodore, for he felt that he could now openly express his feelings towards the Mexican government. His relations with them had been growing worse and worse for some time past, for finding that the Commodore could not be made use of to further their political schemes, the men in power did everything they possibly could to annoy him. His subordinates at Vera Cruz were directed to disregard his orders, his letters in relation to public matters were unnoticed, and he saw plainly that the government not only wanted to get rid of him but to defraud him of the pay and prize money still due, amounting to about $40,000.

Commodore Porter had long seen the uselessness of trying to infuse sentiments of true patriotism into the hearts of these people. In vain did he attempt to show them, that with a few clipper vessels built in the United States, they could destroy the commerce of Cuba and soon force the Spaniards to acknowledge their independence. He tried to bring about a union of the Mexican and Columbian navies, promising if he could have command of the combined force to sweep the Spaniards from the Gulf of Mexico. The Mexicans listened favorably to this project, but the Columbians finding that the former people intended to saddle them with all the expense, broke off negotiations and would have nothing more to do with the plan. As a last resort, the Commodore made a proposition to the

Mexican government to destroy the Spanish fleet in the Havana. An enterprising American had volunteered to blow up every vessel in the harbor for the sum of $150,000. His scheme was to run into port in a schooner bearing American colors in distress, and operate at night by means of torpedoes. The Commodore, after carefully examining the plans, felt satisfied that they could be successfully carried out. A similar plan of torpedoes invented by Fulton had been approved by the navy commissioners when the Commodore was a member of the board, and was supposed to be a profound secret in that office. As to the atrocity of sending hundreds of people to their final account, in such a summary manner, it may be remarked that the true policy is to make war as destructive as possible while it lasts.

In the majority of cases war is forced upon a people for the purpose of impeding their advancement, or to gain some advantage to which the aggressors have no right. It is undertaken by the powerful and arrogant, against their weaker neighbors, who not having the naval and military resources of their enemy at command, must resort to such methods as offer themselves to punish an unscrupulous foe. The pistol places the feeble stripling on a level with the burly bully, and in like manner the torpedo places an insignificant country on an equality with France or England. We who suffered so much by means of infernal machines during our civil war, have learned to regard them as important adjuncts, and are no longer influenced by humanitarian notions in regard to their use, and it will be found, in the future, that torpedoes will have greater influence in preserving peace between nations, than all the exertions of the most skillful diplomatists.

The idea of blowing up the Spaniards by wholesale pleased the Mexicans mightily, but they could by no means understand the machine which was to effect such results, or comprehend the hardihood of a man who should dare to place it under a ship's bottom. They concluded therefore, that the plan was merely a trick to extort money, although the inventor asked for nothing until he had destroyed three frigates, which he was willing to risk his life in attempting. But no logic could induce the Mexicans to invest

$150,000 in such pyrotechnics, they preferred spending their money in fire works for festivals, or keeping it where it would inure to their own personal benefit. The scheme was abandoned, not because they did not desire to see the enemy humbled, but because they determined to give no more money towards the navy. They still considered the capture of the Guerrero a dead loss, never for a moment considering the sentiment of national honor or the renown gained to the nation by so gallant a defense.

The Spaniards had threatened to blockade the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico, and Commodore Porter prepared a number of large lighters, pulling twenty oars each, and mounting a long heavy eighteen pounder. These were intended to act as gunboats, to annoy the enemy in case he should get becalmed in shore; but the government even refused money for this purpose, and it was evident that the Mexican rulers were dead to every sentiment of national pride, and it was probable that Spanish influence still prevailed in the higher and influential circles of the capital.

There were now but two or three American officers remaining in the Mexican navy, the vessels for want of means to repair them lay moored to the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, looking like a lot of decayed hulks, in fact not dissimilar from the appearance they presented when the Commodore first took command. He had done his best to infuse some vitality into the navy, but all his energy could not save it from destruction.

In one respect the Mexicans very much resemble the Turks. When they want to get rid of a person in their employ, they treat him with marked politeness, while at the same time they are cutting off his pecuniary resources and depriving him of all authority over his subordinates. Commodore Porter soon found himself without pay, and had to depend upon some merchant friends in Vera Cruz for the means of subsistence. He took a house in the city, and his occupation ceased altogether, for he had scarcely a shadow of authority. He had been living on shore about a month, when one night he was awakened by a noise at the door of an apartment adjoining his sleeping room, and a moment afterwards the door was cautiously opened,

and some one stole into the chamber. The Commodore seized his sword which stood at his bedside, and advancing in the dark to the middle of the room, called out "who is there?" There was no answer but at the same moment he heard a deep breathing, which seemed to proceed from beneath a centre table covered with a large cloth, and hearing no reply to a second summons, he thrust his sword under the table and into the body of his nocturnal visitor, who immediately rose up, overturning the table and grappled his assailant. The Commodore however, gave the assassin a cut over the head, and he fell weltering in his blood. At this instant, another person rushed at the Commodore, striking at him with a knife and cutting his wrapper a foot down, but fortunately, the garment was padded with cotton and the knife did not penetrate to the flesh. The second assassin, foiled in his design, jumped through a glass door carrying with him all the frame, and escaped from the house. The servants, hearing the uproar, rushed to the scene, where they found the Commodore standing over the prostrate form of a herculean negro, whose blood was running all over the floor. The negro was too far gone to give any account of himself, but only said "I was told to do it, it wasn't my fault," and being carried to the hospital died a day or two afterwards. The other assassin was never captured, although the wounds in his face, received by jumping through the glass door, would have easily identified him. Whatever the cause of this attack, Commodore Porter's friends assured him that Mexico was not a safe place for him to reside in, and after staying long enough to satisfy his enemies that he was not driven away by fear, he took passage for the United States in 1829.

He addressed a letter to the Mexican government, sending in his resignation, which was accepted with a profusion of regrets, but when he demanded his pay and prize money, they promised him that the amount should be forthcoming as soon as the government should be in funds, which, unfortunately for their creditors, never happened to be the case. It was without regret that he left Mexico, where some of his fondest hopes lie buried, where the climate of the coast had made great inroads upon his con-

stitution, and where he felt that the enmity of the American administration still followed him.

It was hinted to him, on several occasions, that the Mexican minister at Washington, anxious to preserve pleasant relations with the government to which he was accredited, had expressed himself to his own government unfavorably towards retaining the Commodore in the Mexican navy, on the ground that the United States government did not consider it a friendly act to employ an officer who had been sentenced by court martial for a violation of Spanish neutrality; that his retention might seriously complicate the relations between the two countries, and that they should find means to relieve themselves of the only obstacle to a good understanding between Mexico and the United States.

If these reports were untrue, they at least looked very plausible, and the Mexican government laid itself open to the charge of having acted in a treacherous manner towards a gallant officer, whom they had invited, under the most illusory promises, to enter their service, only to get rid of him the moment he stood in their way with another government. It was, however, fortunate for Commodore Porter that matters happened as they did, for had he remained in the Mexican service for a few years longer, his fate might have become inevitably fixed with a people, with whom he could never have held any very intimate associations, and he would have been deprived of the satisfaction which awaited him on his return to the United States, under the administration of President Jackson.

CHAPTER XX.

THE career of Commodore Porter had been checkered, but he never felt such lowness of spirits as when he returned home from Mexico, in October, 1829, broken down in health and fortune.

Fortunately, adversity often throws us upon the generosity and magnanimity of the successful, and though once placed under the ban of executive power, and suffering its persecution, the Commodore was about to be relieved from that pressure which had pursued him abroad, and secure a triumph which would make amends for all the inconvenience to which he had been put. Under the impression, occasioned by the letters he had received, Commodore Porter turned to the new administration with perfect confidence. Besides the president, several members of the cabinet, including Judge Branch, were his strong friends, and Mr. Mahlon Dickerson, who was one of the president's most intimate friends, was warmly interested in the Commodore's affairs, and kept his case constantly within the notice of the executive.

Immediately on his arrival in Washington, Commodore Porter called on the president, who offered him *personally*, as he had before offered through his friends, to nominate him to the senate to fill his old position in the navy. "Thank you kindly, sir," said the Commodore, "beggars should not be choosers, but I would rather dig than associate with the men who sentenced me for upholding the honor of the flag." "Right, by the eternal," said old Hickory, "you shall not either if I can help it, I wouldn't associate with them myself." The president said he must take time to think over the matter, while the Commodore returned to his home in Chester, trusting to Jackson's liberality to do for him what he thought best. The following letter to Judge Branch will show the Commodore's feelings on the subject:

Chester, Pa., Oct. 27th, 1829.

My Dear Sir: Your highly esteemed favor of the 23d, has this day been received. Permit me to repeat to you assurances of the most lively gratitude for the interest, from the beginning of my troubles up to this period, which you have manifested in my concerns, and to assure you that nothing can ever obliterate the recollection of it from my memory.

Permit me to assure you also, that I have the utmost confidence in the good and kind intentions of the president and cabinet towards me, and that not a doubt exists in my mind, that in due time he will do for me all that is right and proper, and that which his own honor and mine require. I have not the slightest objection to his taking his own time about it, and indeed prefer that there should be no haste in the matter, as I am desirous that he should be as much influenced by public sentiment as by his own good feelings towards me.

I have been extremely cautious in not communicating anything respecting this reparation, except to my father-in-law and another very confidential friend, and to both under the most solemn injunctions of secrecy. It is not possible that the public can obtain any knowledge of it, except from head quarters. I am aware of the importance of keeping the offers made to me close, and the handle which would be made of them if generally known. To no one but yourself have I ever expressed my feelings on this subject, and on reflection I think I have expressed no more than circumstances warranted; considering the kindness which induced the offer.

My intention is to remain here perfectly quiet, until I am called from my retirement by some official appointment. A visit to Washington during the session would be extremely agreeable to me, as I am desirous of thanking, in person, the many friends who have interested themselves in my favor; but I fear that wrong motives would be ascribed to such visit, and the obtaining of an appointment attributed by those opposed to the administration, more to my own importunities than to a predisposition to serve me. To speak frankly, I think it will be more to the honor of the administration to provide suitably for me, without my appearing to make a single effort to prevail over it to do so. This idea, which I hope you will coincide with, has influenced every part of my conduct since my return from Mexico. It caused me to leave Washington, so soon after I had delivered the dispatches intrusted to me as possible; it has kept me tied down to this village, and induced me to decline the acceptance of every invitation of a public nature in my power to avoid, for fear it might be thought I had wished to excite public feeling. I shall endeavor, however, to see you as soon as possible,

and shall not be happy until I have an opportunity of taking you by the hand. Mrs. Porter desires me to present to you her best regards, accept mine, and believe me most truly and sincerely,

Yours, D. PORTER.

Honorable John Branch, Secretary of the Navy,

Washington, D. C.

A short time after this, the president proposed to make Commodore Porter governor of the naval asylum, with the highest pay, but this would have required a special act of congress, and would have brought him in contact with naval administration, to which under no circumstances would he consent, although the position would otherwise have been a very desirable one. He also declined the appointment of marshal of the District of Columbia, and refused a collectorship on the ground that he did not desire to hold an office inferior to that he had occupied in the navy; but the following letter will explain his views on this subject:

Chester, Oct. 10th, 1829.

My Dear Sir: I received, in Baltimore, your esteemed favor of the 5th, communicating to me the offer of the president to give me, for the present, my choice of the office of marshal of the District of Columbia, or the navy agency at Gibraltar, and as I have but a few moments before the departure of the mail, I must be much briefer in explaining myself, than I should have been under other circumstances.

In the first place, I must beg you to assure the president of my entire confidence in his sincere intention to serve me, and of my entire gratitude for the same, and would most cheerfully accept of any situation which he might think a *proper* one for me, were my interests alone concerned; but having a good deal of the pride of feeling, which has been deeply wounded, my first desire is that it should be gratified regardless of pecuniary considerations.

The navy agency at Gibraltar, were I a commercial man and could connect commerce with the agency, would be highly desirable, but as I have no knowledge of commerce and no desire or capital to embark in it, the agency would neither gratify my pride nor afford a support for my family. The appointment of marshal is still more unsuitable for me, for were the income unlimited in its amount, I could never reconcile it to myself to be under the necessity of drawing my support from the misery of others. Therefore, this is an

office that cannot be thought of with any other feelings than those of the most painful kind.

In order that the president may understand distinctly, what would be agreeable to me, and therefore be relieved from the trouble and anxiety he feels on my account, I beg you to say to him, that I want him to place me before the nation, and the world in a prominent office, not inferior in point of respectability to those I have voluntarily resigned, the one in the navy of the United States, the other in that of Mexico. I want an office of honor and trust, and a salary not dependent on any contingency. The amount of salary is not of consequence to me, for whatever it may be I will contrive to live on it.

For the present, and to produce a suitable effect on the people of the United States, as well as on my political opponents in Mexico, I beg leave to suggest that sending me to that republic in any public character, with or without outfit or salary, if it were only for one month or one week, would be the most gratifying thing the president could do for me and my family.

Mr. Poinsett and the whole legation are, I understand, to be removed, a ship is to sail immediately to bring them home, if any difficulty prevents my taking his place and rank, cannot I be sent in the character of chargé, until another minister is sent? Some one will be required to bear the dispatches, will not I do as well as another, and cannot I remain if it is necessary I should remain? This is the height of my ambition, and to be thought worthy of being intrusted with the interests of this country, after all that has been done and said against me, will amply compensate me for all my sufferings.

I have been but forty-eight hours with my family for nearly four years, and yet, dearly as I love them and dearly as they love me, I am willing to leave this country at one hour's notice, for Mexico; and if I can be there under its protection one week, I shall be fully contented for the remainder of my life to endure penury.

Ask, I beg you, the president to excuse me for this suggestion, and to make allowance for those who have drank deeply of the cup of misery, and to grant to me a favor that I hope may not prove inconvenient. With sentiments of the greatest respect, I remain, truly and sincerely yours, D. PORTER.

Honorable John Branch, Secretary of the Navy.

Some appointment was necessary to enable the Commodore to support his family, and finally President Jackson appointed him consul general to Algiers, on the 18th of March, 1830, a position that was altogether agreeable to him.

The Commodore was evidently very desirous to return to Mexico, in some official capacity, under the United States government. It must be confessed, that he had a feeling of animosity against the government that had treated him so badly. He desired to triumph over his enemies, even at the expense of his own comfort, and had in him that spirit of resistance that nothing could quell. Fortunately, there was no opening for him in that direction, for though Mr. Poinsett was anxious to retire from a post where he had met with so many annoyances, he determined to remain until he taught the Mexicans to respect the United States flag, which he finally did.

The Commodore would indeed have been pleased to lead a fleet against Vera Cruz, and batter down its walls, and nothing would have gratified him more, than to have lived to see Mexico humbled to the dust by the Americans.

His fortunes were now completely wrecked, so that he was rendered supremely happy by the appointment of consul general, and lost no time in repairing to his post, taking passage in the sloop-of-war Boston, commanded by an old friend, Captain Storer.

In July or August, 1830, the Boston reached Port Mahon, where Commodore Porter met the American squadron, under Commodore Biddle, in which were many of his old associates with whom he kept up the most amicable relations, but he would accept of none of Biddle's proffered hospitality, adhering to his resolution not to associate with any of those who had been instrumental in driving him from the navy. However, Commodore Biddle behaved very well on this occasion, seeming desirous to do away with any ill feeling. He placed the Boston at the Commodore's disposal, with the privilege of taking her where he pleased, and keeping her as long as he thought necessary. Commodore Biddle also showed his kindness, in protecting the Commodore's son, Midshipman Porter, from the arbitrary conduct of the latter's commanding officer, who had tried to prevent the midshipman from receiving his warrant, ostensibly because he had played a practical joke upon the schoolmaster, the real motive being the failure of the said midshipman to pick up the worthy captain's cocked hat, which was dropped overboard on the return of the latter

from a dinner party, and never missed until the boat got alongside!

Commodore Porter arrived at Algiers on the 31st of August, 1830, and not finding the person there, whom he was sent to relieve, he left for Tunis to avoid a vexatious quarantine, with the intention of visiting all the consular posts in the Barbary States, as they were dependencies on his consul generalship.

In the meantime, France had made war on Algiers, and captured the place, and there was no longer any necessity of keeping a government representative there. As soon as this was known to President Jackson, who never forgot a promise or a friend, he had the office of chargé d'affaires to Turkey established by act of congress, and on the 15th of April, 1831, Commodore Porter was commissioned to fill the place. Commodore Biddle immediately sent the sloop of war, John Adams, Captain Voorhees, to take him to Constantinople.

The following letter, from Commodore Porter, will give an insight into the history of those times, and we therefore deem it worthy of insertion:

Port Mahon, November 26, 1830.

My Dear Friend: after visiting Gibraltar, this place, Algiers, Tunis, Naples and Leghorn, I have returned here to pass the winter, unless otherwise ordered or unless I go to Tunis. Of course you know the fate of Algiers. From the circumstances which have since transpired, there cannot be a doubt that the city was sold to the French by the dey, Hussien Pasha; and that the price of it was the two millions of dollars and an immense amount of jewels and other valuable articles, which he was allowed to take away with him. The fact is, that he had, ever since the death of Alli Kogia, shut himself up in the fortified palace of Casauba, with his treasure, where he was literally a prisoner longing for his liberty, for he dare not leave the place for fear of being put to death. The arrival of the French and delivery of the city to them produced his release. He was permitted to take with him whatever he called his own, and a frigate was sent with him, his treasures, his family and connections amounting to two hundred men and women, when he was landed with all the honors of a prince. He applied for a passage in the U. S. sloop-of-war, Boston, to Leghorn, which of course was refused. I afterwards saw him in the street in Leghorn, where he has formed a connection with some Jews, one of whom is Bonsenac of the firm of Boncara and

Bonsenac, who made the contract with Bonaparte in Egypt, for supplies for the troops, and which has been the principal cause of, or pretext for, the difficulties between the dey and France.

The dey intends, he says, to establish at Leghorn, a banking house, and as there are 12000 Jews in that place, enjoying in all respects the rights of Christians, and who have the management of all the money concerns of Italy, and particularly Tuscany, he will no doubt do well. But the meanness and cupidity of the wretch are beyond all bounds, for it is said and believed that he has declared his intention of applying to the French government for a pension.

He attempts to keep up the state and pretensions of a prince, but from what I can see I am of the opinion that were it not for his enormous wealth, he must be considered little better than a pedler. At Naples he shook off about 50 persons of his *tail*, as the highlander in Waverly calls it, and left that place for Leghorn with the rest in a steamboat, after jewing the captain down to ten dollars for each person, white, brown and black. He had a motley set of cut-throat vagabonds about him. It is said about forty more were to be shaken off at Leghorn.

Bonsenac says that in one case, which was too large to be taken into the door of the dey's house near Leghorn, and which consequently had to be broken to take out the contents, he saw guns, pistols and swords, covered with gold and studded with diamonds and other precious stones, to the amount of at least $200,000. He says he does not know what the dey is worth, nor does the dey know himself; but from what he has seen, he is induced to believe that he is the richest private individual in the world. This is certain, the French could only remit to Toulon from Algiers, the comparatively small amount of sixteen millions of dollars out of one hundred and fifty millions, which were known to have been not long before in the treasury. That there has been great plundering, and that chiefly by the dey and the party faithful to him, there is not a doubt; and it is equally certain that he had long been preparing himself to remove with his wealth. The French have instituted an inquiry into this matter, and have, I understand, acquitted Marshal Beaumont, who was suspected of applying part of it to his own use.

The French appear somewhat at a loss what to do with Algiers. They do not occupy one foot of territory beyond the reach of their shot, yet they are about forming what they call an agricultural society, and offer to make large grants in the interior, to such as are disposed to settle there, hoping thereby to induce the Swiss to emigrate, and interpose a barrier of armed peasantry between the French troops and the Arabs who wofully annoy them. At the expiration

of four years, if the occupant wishes to retain his land, for which time he has the use of it gratis, it will be sold to him at the rate of five francs an arpent. This looks like selling the skin before the bear is killed!

The expedition has cost France a vast deal of money, more than she found in the treasury, and she is compelled now to resort to every means of remunerating herself. Among other things, she is about forming a company, somewhat similar to the British East India Company, to occupy the eastern part of the regency. Everything in fact indicates a disposition to hold on to what they have got, and to make the most of it, and I am of opinion that this originated in their disappointment about the treasure. Bona, which was given up by its bey, is now occupied by the French. They are widening the streets of Algiers, numbering the houses, and they have reduced the garrison to five thousand troops, but say they intend extending their conquests in the spring. I not only think they will not, but I think they *cannot*.

They speak of sending forces to occupy Tunis and Tripoli. They have already taken advantage of the panic, which the capture of Algiers produced, and have extorted from Tripoli a large amount of money. They have compelled the bey of Tunis to submit to a most onerous treaty, and have paved the way for great opposition to any military operations that may be set on foot, in either of those regencies. If the French occupy Tunis or Tripoli, they will only occupy their ruins. Their princes are native Moors. They are not prisoners in their own castles, but have their extensive regencies open to them, to any part of which they can retire, and will, if it becomes necessary, retire with their treasures, families and people, when opposition can no longer avail. When combined Europe could not prevail over Saladin, what can France alone expect or hope for, when opposed by the combined efforts of the princes and sheiks of Africa? Hussein Pasha was a Turk, and as such, was hated by the Moors of Algiers, yet great efforts were made to oppose the invaders, not on his account, but on account of their religion. What progress has France made in this conquest? Now Algiers was sold to her, and it is unsafe for a Frenchman to go outside the walls. What then must the French expect if they assail Tunis and Tripoli? A war of extermination carried on by bigoted Arabs, led on by native princes.

I have given you this long and tolerably detailed account of facts and my opinions, in the hope that it might amuse you and your friends. I have drawn it up in great haste, and as I write a

very cramped hand, I leave you to make it out for them the best way you can.

With my best respects for every member of your family, and a kiss for my little namesake, accept assurances of my great esteem.

Yours truly,

DAVID PORTER.

J. P. McCorkle, Esq.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN August 1831, Commodore Porter proceeded to his new post of duty. A passage was granted to the U. S. ship, John Adams, in which he had embarked, to pass up the Dardanelles without dismounting her guns, a favor which at that time was seldom granted to foreign vessels of war. The Turkish authorities at first insisted that the John Adams should not be exempted from the operation of this rule, but the Commodore would not agree to Captain Voorhees committing so humiliating an act, for he would never consent to see the American flag treated with less respect than that of the most favored nation. While waiting the decision of the Turks, the Commodore improved the time in visiting the site of the ancient Troy, the forts of the Dardanelles, and in cultivating the acquaintance of the Turkish authorities, until the governor of the forts informed him that a firman had been issued, to permit the ship to pass up. The Turks were much struck with the beautiful sloop of war, and as the sultan was at that time building up a navy, he was desirous of personally inspecting her at Constantinople.

Mahmoud was a liberal and enlightened monarch, and particularly interested in all improvements in naval architecture, and his making an exception in favor of the John Adams created quite an excitement among the diplomatic

representatives in Turkey, who all wrote voluminous dispatches to their respective governments on the occasion, but the sultan, determined to have his own way in the matter, did not even heed the remonstrances of the grand vizier, who looked upon the whole transaction as a fearful breach of diplomatic etiquette. At that time, it was not customary for a simple chargé d' affaires to be received by the sultan, but the Commodore determined that the Turks should recognize the representative of the United States, with as much form as they did the ministers of the three great European powers, and he accordingly made such representations to the porte, through the dragoman, that Mahmoud consented to receive him, *informally* but not officially; the Turkish government only recognize the high rank of minister as entitled to a public reception at the hands of the sultan, and only considered that a foreign government paid it a high compliment by accrediting a full minister to the porte. The Commodore was therefore obliged to be satisfied with being received in this informal way, as it would have been a great breach of diplomatic etiquette to receive a chargé d'affaires in any other manner, or on an equality with a minister.

All official business of a foreign representative with the porte, is conducted through a dragoman, and the person who then filled this important office under Commodore Porter, was Mr. William B. Hodgson of Virginia, who had the reputation of being an accomplished linguist, and therefore well qualified for the position of interpreter. There was also another official attached to the legation, Mr. Ascaroglou, an Armenian, whose duty it was to interpret Mr. Hodgson's interpretation to the interpreter of the grand vizier! In fact, so many forms had to be gone through, that by the time the words finally reached the minister, their meaning was quite changed in passing from one language to another. Besides, the dragoman and the interpreter, the Commodore's nephew, Mr. George Porter, was attached to the legation as secretary, together with two *cavasses*, old janissaries who had escaped the massacre. These latter individuals were furnished by the porte, to hold communication with the American repre-

sentative, and to precede him and the dragoman whenever they went abroad.

The Commodore was appalled at learning what a multitude of forms had to be gone through with, before he could speak in the presence of his celestial majesty. Diplomacy was an art in which he had received no instruction, and judging from the objections he made to genuflections and other necessary formalities, he was about to prove himself a very unapt scholar, but he finally consented to take instructions from Mr. Ascaroglou, as to how he should enter, and how retire from the sublime presence.

The Armenians are the greatest adepts in diplomacy of any people in Turkey, and Ascaroglou was the Turveydrop of his race. He knew to a fraction, just how near to bring his forehead to the ground on every occasion of ceremony. In the presence of the sultan he would bump his head against the floor, with force enough to knock an ordinary man's brains out; to the grand vizier he would not strike it quite so hard; to the other ministers he would drop on one knee, bow his head and cross his hands over his breast; to the next in grade his salute was a low salaam, his hand on his forehead, to the next below a rather familiar salaam and a smile; while to persons of his own rank you could see nothing but the twitching of his long ears which moved to show that he recognized their existence, but would die sooner than make the first advances. However should one of his equals salute him first, he received in return a condescending salaam, and the expression of a hope "that it might never rain upon his grave." Mr. Ascaroglou, then, was an authority that the chargé d'affaires could not dispute, especially when backed by the dragoman, Mr. Hodgson, who though but recently arrived in Turkey *professed* to know all about the diplomatic customs.

The Commodore did not mind so much having to make a salaam in going into the mighty presence, but the idea of walking backwards to the door with his eyes fixed upon the ground he thought was a little too much! he had never backed out of anything yet, and he thought it unbecoming an American citizen to follow such practices. So while taking his instructions in regard to the manner of

proceeding, he determined in his own mind to do pretty much as he thought proper.

On the appointed day, the chargé d'affaires and his suite repaired to the imperial palace, on the banks of the Bosphorus, where the sultan was to meet the American representative. His majesty came in a magnificent caique, covered with carving and gilding, and pulled by twenty-four heculean Greeks. When the sultan landed, the Commodore and his attendants, though close to the Turks, were unnoticed by the latter, who considered the Christians highly honored by being allowed to look upon the mighty potentate, whose nod could deprive the highest of his subjects of their lives and property.

The sultan did not compel the Americans to wait long. Refreshments were served them in an ante room, followed by pipes and coffee. The pipe stems were of jasmine, and the pipes and coffee cup holders were studded with diamonds. As to the coffee, it was such as only the Turks can prepare. After enjoying these luxuries, the Commodore and party were ushered into the reception saloon, a beautiful apartment decorated in the most elaborate oriental style, where the sultan, surrounded by his high dignitaries, gave them audience. The sultan kept his seat according to custom, but motioned the Commodore to a chair by his side, which was immediately occupied by the American representative, in the same manner as if he had been calling on the president of the United States, leaving Mr. Ascaroglou to bow to the ground as often as suited him, which he accordingly did a sufficient number of times to satisfy even Turkish etiquette, meanwhile all the others remained standing. The interview was short, as these audiences generally are, the sultan wished his guest happiness and prosperity, paid some compliments to the United States, made some inquiries about the navy, and informed the Commodore that he would send a constructor on board the John Adams to take the ship's lines, etc.

The papers accrediting Commodore Porter chargé d' affaires were then handed to the sultan's principal dragoman, and after a short conversation on general topics the sultan rose and the Commodore and party backed out in very good style from the imperial presence, the Commodore bowing and the rest making the Turkish salaam.

During the first few years of his residence in Turkey, Commodore Porter occupied a modest house in Pera, a suburb of Constantinople, in great contrast to the residences of the representatives of the great European powers, which were gorgeous palaces kept up in a princely style. At his house he received all Americans, visiting Constantinople, with great hospitality, and afforded them so many facilities of various kinds that everybody left with the kindest feelings towards him. This is not always the case with our ministers abroad, who apparently forget what they are sent for, and sometimes disgust their countrymen by treating them with indifference, only attending to the wants of those who, from their strong influence at home, might make trouble for the representative in case he neglected their interests.

At the time of which we write, the great summer resort for the corps diplomatique was *Buyukderi* on the Bosphorus, six miles from the Black sea, where the breeze from the north neutralized what would otherwise have been the intense heat of the climate. Here the foreign ministers lived in elegant style, and owned handsome caiques in which they skimmed over the waters of the Bosphorus. The Commodore had sufficient occupation for a year or two in becoming acquainted with the mysteries of diplomacy, which, in the opinion of these ministers, was the most important subject with which the human intellect could grapple, and not a man of them would have deviated a hair's breadth, from the prescribed rules of the Turkish court, even in a case of life and death. He, however, derived more pleasure from visiting the little villages of *Madsciar*, *Kallessi* and *Umur Keni*, and in climbing *Yash-a-dagh* (the Giant's mountain), than from the society of diplomatists who were apparently animated solely by a desire to live in the smiles of the sultan, and who, for the honor of an audience, would salaam to the earth an unlimited number of times.

Shortly after the Commodore had delivered his credentials, he was riding through *Tersaneh* (the government dock yard), when he met the sultan on horseback, accompanied by only two attendants. His majesty stopped and bowed, and then sent a messenger to say that he would be

happy if the Commodore would accompany him through the dock yard, for the sultan was well aware that the American representative was an experienced naval commander, and was anxious to have the benefit of his professional opinion. He joined the sultan, and they walked through the dock yard, and examined the ships on the stocks, talking as familiarly, through an interpreter, as if they had known each other for years. The Commodore, with great frankness, pointed out all the defects in the Turkish naval system, without offense to his majesty, who told him he would send his naval pasha to consult with him on the subject, which he did.

This interview made such an agreeable impression upon the sultan, that in a short time all the principal dignitaries of the empire called on the Commodore, and invited him to their palaces, for it was only necessary for his majesty to notice anybody with marks of favor, to have him receive every attention. The interview was soon known to the foreign ministers, who talked over it for a week, attributing it with true diplomatic stupidity to every motive but the right one, viz: the sultan's desire to obtain naval information.

The valley of Sweet waters was a favorite resort of the sultan, especially on the days when it was visited by the ladies of Constantinople in great numbers, with children and attendants, to pass the time amid the beautiful kiosks and retreats which every where abound. It is a pleasing picture to see the handsome Turkish children, dressed in their picturesque garb, throwing off the restraints under which they are kept in the harem, and playing around as any other children would, while their mothers and nurses, wrapped in white *yaskmacks*, with only their eyes visible, waddle about after the youngsters, like so many ducks, while the latter are dabbling in the silvery waters of the little river which runs through the plain, to the terror of their unsophisticated mammas.

Turks seldom venture to intrude upon the privacy of the families assembled here, which privacy is sacred in their eyes, but foreigners did sometimes trespass and their presence was not regarded as obnoxious, so long as they did not attempt to be too familiar. Nothing pleased the Commodore so much, as to visit the valley of Sweet waters

and see the young children playing on the green sward, and hear their joyous shouts, which reminded him of the loved ones at home, of whom he had seen so little since 1826, that he scarcely remembered their features. It was stern necessity which parted them from him, the necessity of providing for and educating them, which he could not do at Constantinople.

On one of these visits the Commodore was observed by the sultan, who sent for him and seating him near by, offered him pipes and coffee, to which luxury he had become decidedly addicted. There they sat and talked on naval matters, a subject of which his majesty was never tired. These interviews were not unfrequent, for the sultan never omitted sending for the Commodore when he saw him at the valley of Sweet waters.

The Commodore soon began to like the Turks, who treated him with great distinction and kindness. He esteemed them for their apparent honesty, for they would not lie like Europeans, nor steal like Mexicans. In fact, he liked everything connected with them but their climate, which was already making inroads on his constitution. Every year, on this account, he sought for some new summer retreat. Once he tried Princess islands in the sea of Marmora, where there are beautiful summer residences, fitted up to suit either European or Turkish tastes. Next, he tried a summer at Scutari, on the Asiatic shore, where he amused himself by long drives around the beautiful country, and in visiting the ruins of ancient Chalcedon, four miles to the southward. Finally he was so much pleased with a visit to San Stephano, a Greek town, that he rented a kiosk there for the summer, and finally purchased the residence from its owner, a Greek merchant.

San Stephano lies directly on the sea of Marmora, and is noted for the mildness of its climate, and the purity of its air. He found his residence at San Stephano, so comfortable and homelike, that from 1834, he made it his abode, never again passing a winter in the city of Pera, although he retained his house there for the transaction of the business of the legation. At Pera he would spend the day on festival occasions, or when called upon to make official visits.

The kiosk at San Stephano, was a cottage built of brick and wood, with a porch nearly all around it, and situated in a beautiful garden of some six acres, stocked with the choicest fruits. The garden was the chief attraction of the place, and the Commodore spent much of his time with his books, seated under the umbrageous trees, whence a most magnificent view was presented of the sea of Marmora.

This was his life in summer, but in winter he was rather lonesome in his snug quarters, till in 1834, his brother-in-law Dr. Heap, who had been for many years consul to Tunis, paid him a visit with his whole family, including the Commodore's widowed sister, Mrs. Mary Brown, and her son John P. Brown. When Dr. Heap's visit ended, the Commodore invited Mrs. Brown and her son to make his house their future home, and from that time Mrs. Brown became the female head of his establishment, and added so much to his comfort by her care and watchfulness, that life became much more pleasant to him. He had his nephew John P. Brown educated by direction of the state department, to perform the duties of dragoman, and he succeeded Mr. Hodgson in that post. Mr. Brown remained in the diplomatic service at Constantinople from 1836 till his death in 1871, during which time he acted in different years as chargé d'affaires with great credit to himself, and satisfaction to the United States government.

Considering himself now permanently settled in Constantinople, and having no fear of political parties, the Commodore commenced embellishing the beautiful spot he had purchased for a residence, and added so much to the size of his kiosk that the original building was quite lost sight of, and in its place appeared a very handsome residence, in the modern Greek style, containing all the conveniences that could be desired. The *Palace*, as he playfully called it, was divided into three compartments, one comprising his own suite of rooms, including reception room, sitting room, library, dining room, bed room and bath room. The middle portion, which was the original building, he called the *harem*, as it was appropriated to his sister, who there entertained the guests of the family. The other wing was particularly devoted to

diplomatic guests and entertainments, the lower rooms were occupied by his secretary, Mr. Porter. A large dining room for guests, and a small one for his family, concludes the list of rooms in his establishment.

The larger reception chamber was furnished in Turkish style, with a rich carpet and a divan covered with Damascus satin. The curtains were of the same material. In the centre of the divan a mirror extended from the pier table to the ceiling. Around the room stood small tables inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and containing choice books, or ornamented with landscapes. The views were particularly beautiful from this saloon, the windows of which overlooked the sea, with hundreds of vessels continually passing to and fro. The view included the island of Marmora, from which the Turks obtain the marble for their splendid palaces, beyond was the Asiatic shore, with its mountains and valleys covered with luxuriant vegetation, and dotted with numerous hamlets and burial places. Farther in the interior could be seen the snow capped mount Olympus, rearing its head 9000 feet above the sea level, a grand spectacle, above which the classic Greeks of old imagined a celestial abode bathed in eternal sunshine, free from the storms that vexed the lower world, and peopled by the gods, who, feasting on nectar and ambrosia, were charmed by the music of Apollo's lyre, and by the songs of the muses.

Far to the left appeared the seven beautiful Princess islands, the three largest containing the country seats of many wealthy European merchants. It was on one of the smaller islands that Sir Henry Bulwer, then British ambassador, expended a fortune to establish a *chif lick* (farm), with a splendid kiosk for the accomodation of a beautiful Greek princess, the light of his eyes, who reckless of public opinion openly received the attentions of the ambassador. Away to the left is seen the dark red houses of Scutari, relieved only by the cypresses of the Greek cemetery, while the city of Constantinople, with golden minarets, handsome palaces and private edifices ornamented in fanciful style, rises from the rich frame of the landscape like a great brilliant in a golden setting. It was a view such as cannot be imagined. It must be seen to be

realized, and the illusion can only be dissolved by entering the city and being surrounded by its filth and dogs. But no inconveniences of the sort were felt at San Stephano, which is one of the cleanest little villages in existence.

The Commodore's grounds were surrounded by a stone wall, except where they bordered the sea shore, where he kept his boats. He had a fine vineyard producing *chonech*, grapes, a light, thin skinned, transparent fruit, fit for the palate of the gods. Fine fruits abounded, and he literally reclined under his own vine and fig tree. From the door of the kiosk two fine avenues of trees led to the entrance gate, on one side of which was a large lodge for the *capougee*, on the other a lodge for the two *cavasses*, or guards, provided for the minister, by the Turkish government. Besides all this, there was a beautiful flower garden, where the Commodore amused himself in the cultivation of choice plants, which grow luxuriantly in that climate.

Like most sailors, he had a fondness for horses, which his means now enabled him to indulge in, and he procured a select stock at a moderate outlay; among them several Arabians which were not surpassed by any in the sultan's stables. One of the horses was a beautiful sorrel colored stallion, whose skin, when lighted by the sun, shone like gold. This animal, purchased by the Commodore in what was supposed to be a dying condition, was completely cured by an English farrier, and proved to be of inestimable value. He had also fine carriage horses and good English carriages, which contributed essentially to his enjoyment.

One of the first things he did, after establishing himself at San Stephano, was to erect a tall flagstaff in the centre of the grounds, on which every morning, at 8 o'clock, the American flag was hoisted by the *capougee* and the two *cavasses*, who went through with as much ceremony on the occasion, as if they were on board a ship of war, the Commodore meanwhile watching them from the portico, to see that the flag he loved was treated with proper respect, and that it was hoisted *chock up*, and properly *belayed*, after which the three worthies would step back a short distance, and after calmly surveying the result of

their combined labors, would leisurely stroll back to their lodges to sit and smoke the rest of the day. The *capougee* always exclaimed, "Mashallah, we did that well!"

Every American vessel that passed San Stephano saluted that flag by lowering her own three times half way down, when the three worthies were at their posts to return it.

On Sundays or holidays, a larger ensign, that had been presented by the commander of a ship of war, was raised, and to see that his country's honored flag was thrown to the breeze on all proper occasions seemed now to be one of the greatest pleasures of the Commodore's life. Long before his death he indicated to his sister the spot at the foot of the flag staff where he wished to be buried, until the United States government should send for his remains to inter them in his native land.

In 1834 or 35, the American missionaries in Syria met with severe losses by fire, and were finally compelled to leave that country on account of the plague. The moment the Commodore heard of their misfortunes, he invited several of the families to reside with him until they could provide for themselves in a suitable manner at Constantinople, for he was keenly alive to the misfortunes of others, and particularly those who had given up their homes and country to ameliorate the condition of barbarous peoples. On the occasion of the great conflagration in Pera, when the missionaries in that city were all burned out, and also at the time the pestilence was raging in Constantinople, whole families found shelter beneath his hospitable roof.

He took deep interest in the prosperity of the American Board of Foreign Missions, which had recently founded an establishment at Constantinople, frequently visiting their schools to watch their progress, and establishing one at his own expense at San Stephano, to which he gave up a great deal of his time.

In the year of the great pestilence, when all who could get away, were fleeing from Constantinople, his house was again the refuge of the missionaries. The *Palace*, as it was called, was fitted with a fumigating closet; carpets, curtains, and everything that could contain the germs of disease were removed, and nothing was left except the wooden chairs and beds. A stranger entering the house —

after being fumigated—would be given a seat on a wooden chair in the middle of the room, so as not to introduce the plague, which can only be communicated by contact. In this way, by using strict precautions, the Commodore kept the pestilence from his grounds, and no doubt saved many lives.

Although of a kind and hospitable disposition, he had been so long accustomed to the discipline of a ship of war, that he carried out the same system in his household affairs, and no one would have any more dreamed of disobeying his orders, than if they had been serving under his command on shipboard. Those who accepted his hospitality, soon learning his peculiarities, were always anxious to conform to his rules; which they knew were for their benefit. It was his habit to have his sister read to him a couple of hours every morning. At the appointed time he was in his seat, clad in a dressing gown, and with a magnificent Angora cat by his side. As he listened patiently to the reading, he would smooth the fur on Angora's back, often no doubt meditating over the events of his past life. The reading was generally of a solid kind, theology, history, travels and the classics. At the conclusion he would retire to his room for several hours, where no one ventured to disturb him.

His meals were served with a great deal of form, and his table laid so that in case several persons should happen to come in, he could entertain them without any change or confusion. He expected every one to be in proper toilette, at each meal, and curl papers, slippers or morning wrappers were things he would not tolerate. Two waiters always stood at his table, one at the back of his own chair waited exclusively on him. He had a Greek cook, and his liking for Turkish habits extended even to their cookery. He considered it a good rule, when in a foreign country, to follow as closely as possible the customs of the people, in eating and drinking, believing such a course conducive to health.

At an appointed time after dinner, the Commodore's carriage and Hungarian coach horses were at the door, the *cavasses* mounted the box with the coachman, and he would drive around the environs of Constantinople,

or on the beach on the south side, towards Florida, a sweet little valley much resorted to by sportsmen in the quail season, who after a morning's sport repaired thither to refresh themselves and count their game. It was also a great place for picnics, where the Greek and European beauties assembled to show their graces. The Commodore, who was a great admirer of beauty, could here see it displayed in every nationality and costume. He sometimes ventured on a flirtation with some pretty girl of sixteen, by presenting her with a bunch of flowers, and the ladies thought themselves privileged, at Floria especially, when honored, as they considered it, by the American *elchy bey's* attention. To his last days he continued his fondness for young people, whom he delighted to amuse, and his house was so popular with them, that he had no chance to be lonely.

Fourth of July was his day of days, when the great flag was hoisted at San Stephano, and the anniversary of our independence celebrated by a united dinner of all the Americans in Constantinople. Some beautiful spot would be chosen by the Commodore for the celebration, where the Declaration of Independence was read, toasts were drank, and a short patriotic address delivered by himself. The celebration was not considered complete without the presence of all the children, for it was the Commodore's maxim that the youth should be imbued with the principles of liberty, from the time they began to think, and that they should be made familiar with the history of their country's revolutionary struggle, and venerate Independence Day as the greatest of anniversaries. Besides, he thought that no festival could be successful, where the happy voices of children were not heard.

Perhaps the reader may weary of this minute recital of the Commodore's habits of life, but it is these apparent trifles which enable one to judge of a man's true character. His early career had been one of toil and excitement, not calculated to fit him for the duties of domestic life. At that period he was indifferent to the luxuries of refined society, and impatient of the forms and ceremonies which he deemed unsuited to the profession of a sailor. Yet here we find him, at Constantinople, impressed with the

necessity of conforming to all things affecting his position, and though it was at first disagreeable to have to change his habits, yet so capable was he of conforming to circumstances, that his new duties became to him as second nature. In fact, the sailor was so completely absorbed by the diplomat, that one would never have suspected the American representative of having commanded a ship of war. Few men ever made a better impression on a diplomatic corps; and his intercourse with the foreign representatives at Constantinople was of the most pleasant kind. He was well known to them, by reputation, for his services to his country on the ocean, was appreciated for his general intelligence and *savoir faire*, and was a universal favorite in public and in private circles. He was on the best of terms possible with Lord Ponsonby, Count Portallis, Count Stirmir, and in fact with all the ambassadors.

The Barrout-jee Pacha (chief of the imperial powder works), lived on the outskirts of San Stephano. His palace was a small village of itself, and was as gorgeous in its equipments as some of the sultan's. The Turkish pachas are apt, as a general thing, to be careful and not make too much external show, for fear of exciting the jealousy of the government, and thus invite a visit from the bow-string, but the Barrout-jee Pacha was a great favorite with the sultan, a large portion of the residence was fitted on purpose for the latter's reception, and contained a suite of apartments not surpassed by any in the imperial palace. Here his majesty would often come and spend the whole day, and on such occasions would wander incognito around San Stephano, that is, accompanied only by the pacha and one or two attendants. The sultan, somehow, always managed to visit the Commodore's grounds, which he admired very much, and the latter, of course knowing when to expect him, was always ready to receive his majesty in a proper manner, though without any special ceremony beyond hoisting the large flag, which he considered honor enough for any one. In this way the sultan and himself had many interviews which gradually paved the way to a very social and friendly state of affairs; and enabled his majesty to discuss naval matters

fully, with one whom he knew was master of his profession. The Commodore gradually made the sultan understand how inferior were his ships of war to those of Europeans, and showed all the defects in the Turkish system of naval administration.

Mr. Henry Eckford, the celebrated ship builder, had arrived at Constantinople with a handsome sloop of war (the United States of 26 guns), which the Turkish government had purchased, and the Commodore strongly advised the sultan to appoint him his chief naval constructor. This was done, and Mr. Eckford was duly installed in office, with high pay and perquisites; but the climate not agreeing with his health, he was compelled to return to the United States. Before the sultan would agree to his leaving the Turkish service, he made him send to America for his foreman, Mr. Rhodes (afterwards constructor in the U. S. navy), who was appointed in his place. Mr. Rhodes, under the advice and direction of the Commodore, made great improvements in the Turkish ships, and held his position for some years. He was ultimately removed, owing to the intrigues of a Turkish pacha, with whom he had quarreled, and he left the Turkish navy just when it was about starting into a real existence.

It was during a visit of the Commodore to the United States, in 1839, that this difficulty occurred. The Turks, knowing his influence with the sultan, took advantage of his absence, and Rhodes, once out of place, refused to return when he had the Commodore's influence to back him. In the year above mentioned, Commodore Porter returned to the United States on a short leave of absence, and having represented to the government, the necessity of a more important mission to Turkey, the matter was brought to the attention of congress, the office of Minister Resident was created, and he was appointed to fill that position, March 3, 1839. While in the United States, he attended the weddings of two of his sons, and made arrangements for the education of his other children, after which he repaired again to his post. During his absence in the United States, his friend Sultan Mahmoud died, and was succeeded on the throne by the Sultan Abdul Mejid.

Soon after his return to Constantinople, the Commodore represented to the Turkish government, that as he had been promoted to a grade which placed him on an equality with the representatives of the great European powers, he would like permission to present his credentials to the sultan in person. The 23d of May, 1841, was therefore appointed by his majesty for that interesting ceremony. The Commodore started from his residence in his large eight oared caique, with the American flag floating at the staff on the stern, and accompanied by his secretary, dragoman and interpreter, with his two *cavasses* sitting up behind. This was a proud day for one who had always looked forward to the time when he should attain the dignity of full minister, and be received with all the ceremony paid to the representatives of the most favored nations. His holding the position of simple chargé d'affaires did not make any difference with Sultan Mahmoud, who received him on all occasions, nor did it make any difference to the Turkish ministers, who served the government from time to time; Reschid Pacha, minister of foreign affairs, Reza Pacha, minister to England, Achmet Pacha, Said Pacha and Capoudan Pacha — the two latter brothers-in-law of the sultan — Mustapha Nouri Pacha, and Kimal Pacha. All these spoke the English and French languages, and were extremely attentive to him and hospitable to the greatest degree, a characteristic of the Turks, whose whole system of social intercourse is pervaded by gentlemanly kindness.

The Turkish dignitaries seldom visit foreigners, but the Commodore's long residence in the country, and the care he had taken to raise no unnecessary points with the Turkish government, had made him a favorite with them, and they not only received him kindly at their houses, but returned his visits, especially in summer. when one had only to step into a caique and land at the doors. Whenever he arrived at one of these hospitable palaces, a number of servants were always in waiting to escort him to the reception room where the *elchy bey* (minister), was announced with great ceremony. The pacha would come to receive him with extended hands, and the salutation "*hosche guelden saphia guelden*," which conveys more than we could express in half

a page of English. It would have been gratifying to Americans to have witnessed the respect paid to their representative at the Ottoman Porte, as it was gratifying to the Commodore, who took it all as a compliment to his country, and not to himself personally. After his appointment as minister, he felt that he could make these visits more as a right, than when he was only chargé d' affaires, and quite satisfied in this conclusion he made his way to Sultan Abdul Mejid's palace. The ceremonies were more imposing than on the former occasion. The sultan arrived in his great carved and gilded caique, dressed in a European frock coat, with a Turkish fez on his head, and a single great diamond on his breast. He was seated under a golden canopy, around which his ministers were grouped, their eyes fixed to the deck, while an officer with a drawn scimetar stood motionless as a statue in front of his imperial master, from whom he never once moved his eyes. Another scarcely less magnificent caique followed the royal barge carrying the sultan's pipe bearer, cup bearer and other attendants. As his majesty stepped on the rich carpets of the palace landing, the fifteen three deckers of the fleet manned yards, and each fired a salute of twenty-one guns. The after ceremony was pretty much what it had been on the former occasion, only the American minister presented his credentials, through his dragoman, to the grand vizier himself, and had the *privilege* of conversing with his majesty on matters pertaining to the affairs of the two nations, although it was seldom or never that such conversation was carried on except through the ministers.

Abdul Mejid was a very different character from his father, the late sultan, never indulging in familiar intercourse with any one, so that the Commodore missed those pleasant little reunions with the sultan at San Stephano, where he could make himself agreeable by suggesting improvements in the Turkish navy.

The letter of credence was contained in a richly embroidered bag of rose colored satin, bound with white, studded with gold stars, and closed with a silken cord. The document was addressed, "To our Great and Good Friend the Sultan Abdul Mejid Khan, Emperor of the

Ottomans" &c., &c. On the delivery of the letter the audience ended.

During his residence at the porte the Commodore had learned the necessity of conforming strictly to court etiquette, which alone would enable a man to steer successfully through the shoals and quicksands of diplomacy.

A year after his return from the United States, his health became still more impaired, and he contracted the painful disease called *angina pectoris*, which caused a great change in his habits and disposition. He now seldom went to Constantinople, but was always glad to see his friends at San Stephano.

While he was chargé d' affaires, he received a visit from Commodore Patterson and family, in the frigate United States, to whom he extended the hospitalities of his house, and afforded them facilities to see whatever was interesting in Constantinople. Among other things the ladies of the family gained admission to the sultan's seraglio, a favor rarely granted to any foreigner. Commodore Porter enjoyed the visit of his old friend of New Orleans and family, and often said that it had added years to his life.

Later, Commodore Elliott, in the Constitution, with Governor Cass's family on board, visited Constantinople; but although he paid Mr. Cass and family every attention, Commodore Porter would only treat Elliott with the bare civility which was required by his position as chargé d'affaires; nor would he accept any attention from him. Commodore Elliott was obnoxious to him on several accounts. He had been a member of the court martial which drove him from the navy, and he despised Elliott for his course in the duel between Decatur and Barron, and his subsequent attempt to clear himself from blame in that transaction. Elliott was Barron's second in that fatal duel, and it was believed could have prevented the meeting had he thought proper to have tried his good offices. Commodore Porter went upon the ground on the occasion, as a mere looker on, or in the hope of preventing the catastrophe which occurred. He rode out on horseback and just after he reached the spot, the shots were fired which stretched both the combatants on the ground. Elliott had come on

the field with a carriage for Commodore Barron and himself, but as soon as Barron and Decatur fell, both apparently mortally wounded, Elliott, appalled at the result, jumped into the carriage and ordering the driver to hasten to Washington, made off as fast as possible. The consequence was, that Commodore Barron was left weltering in his blood on the wet earth, with no one but the surgeon to assist him, and no conveyance to take him from the field. Commodore Porter's feelings would have led him to the side of Decatur, with whom he sympathized in the matter of the duel, and whose opinions in regard to Barron's course in absenting himself from the country in time of war he fully endorsed. Barron also was extremely unfriendly towards Captain Porter, who had been one of the members of his court martial, and we suppose it is human nature, not to like a man who has sentenced us to punishment. But humanity called Captain Porter to the side of the man whom he knew to be his enemy. Decatur was surrounded by friends, but Barron had no one with him until Porter raised him up in a sitting position. Barron said, "My second, Captain Elliott, has gone off with the carriage, and it will be hours before I can be moved."

Captain Porter immediately got some one to attend to Barron, and mounting his horse, pursued Elliott at full speed, and finally overtook him, about a mile from the field, the driver having dismounted to mend a broken trace. As he rode up to the carriage, Elliott opened the door and jumped out, asking in a trembling voice "how things fared on the ground." "They fare so badly, sir," said Captain Porter, "that you left your friend weltering in his blood upon the bare earth; go back and do what you can to lessen the mischief you have aided in committing; go back and do your duty to your wounded friend."

Captain Porter then rode back to the ground, and Elliott not appearing, a carriage was procured from some strangers passing, and Captain Porter got in and helped support the wounded man, who had bled profusely and was very weak. Proceeding slowly towards Washington, they met Captain Elliott returning towards Bladensburg. The latter,

putting his head out of the carriage window, made some inquiry as to how matters stood. Captain Porter immediately jumped from the coach in which he was riding, and said to Elliott, "Your place is here, sir, alongside of your wounded friend, I insist upon your getting in," and he almost forced him into the carriage where Barron was. Once Elliott ventured a remark that it was unfortunate that Bainbridge would not consent to an accommodation, when Barron and Decatur entered into conversation before firing; but Porter did not reply, feeling too much contempt for the man whom he saw was already trimming his sails to meet the coming storm.

When Elliott got into Barron's carriage, Capt. Porter ordered the coachman to proceed to Washington, he riding on horseback by the side of Decatur. He would never allow Elliott to speak to him after that, although the latter endeavored once to make an explanation of his conduct. The fact was, Elliott thought both parties had been killed, and appalled at the consequences of the duel, and dreading arrest as an accessory, he took flight in the manner we have described.

Next day the newspapers teemed with accounts of the affair, and an attempt was made to fasten the blame on Commodore Bainbridge, Decatur's second, who it was reported had said it was too late for compromise, all of which was traced to Capt. Elliott. These facts are obtained from letters written by Captain Porter at the time, and not from rumor or tradition.

The following letter is interesting, in connection with the event which deprived the country of one of its most gallant officers, who fell a victim to a custom unworthy of the age. The letter will serve to throw some light upon that unhappy event.

Washington, April 2d, 1820.

My Dear Hambleton: Tell the Commodore (Bainbridge), I received his letter for which I thank him. I have handed it over to Commodore Rodgers, who has given the statement to Tazewell. It gives the lie completely to some of the reports that have been put afloat. There are some that go to criminate Bainbridge for opposing or rather for discountenancing a reconciliation. The Commodore's recollections of Barron's expressions agree with mine. Barron has apologized to Commodore Bainbridge.

I have heard from several, that Elliott has said, that he considered Bainbridge did not encourage a reconciliation, when the conversation took place between Decatur and Barron before firing, and he mentioned the same thing to me. Some have it that Commodore Bainbridge said, "it is too-late for accommodation, to your stands gentlemen!!!" Others say that we were all against Barron, that we were impatient of his rank!!

It cannot be doubted that every effort has been made to turn public opinion against Decatur (and those friendly to him), and in favor of Barron. Every newspaper that will publish, contains a puff of some kind in favor of Barron and against Decatur. The *Hagerstown Torch Light* contains a long account of the matter, giving a coloring to things highly prejudicial to Decatur and his friends. You need not be at a loss to know where it comes from. Every sly art that can be practiced, and some are very sly (thinking like Elliott, if they stick their heads in a bush they cannot be seen), is put in operation to prejudice the public mind. The friends of Decatur scorn to do such things. The correspondence will be published, and the character of one man in particular (Elliott), be exhibited in its proper colors.

Mr. Tazewell is here, and, if I mistake not, has an abundance of material to enable him to write a highly interesting biographical sketch.

I think Elliott's retreat from the battle of Bladensburg would make an admirable frontispiece. You do not, however, know all the particulars of this affair, let it suffice that he fled from the field, taking with him the only means of conveyance for his wounded friend; that he left him for one hour in a helpless state on the wet ground, and that Barron was at length beholden to strangers for the means of getting from the place. Self, self, was Elliott's only consideration.

Tell Bainbridge not to give himself any uneasiness about these matters. There are enough here to put things to rights.

Justice is slow but sure. God bless you.

D. PORTER.

Samuel Hambleton Esq.,
Purser U. S. Navy.

It was owing to the circumstances detailed above, that Commodore Porter was indisposed to pay or receive any attention from Commodore Elliott. On his last visit to the United States, he was one day at Barnum's Hotel, Baltimore, where a number of persons pressed around him, seeking an introduction. Among the rest Commodore

Porter noticed Elliott approaching, but he gave the latter such a look that he walked away in confusion. Not wanting Commodore Elliott's acquaintance, the American minister notified him of the fact in writing, which was answered by Elliott. The correspondence was published at the time, but is scarcely worth insertion here, as it is likely to interest but few people at this late day. It might seem that the Commodore was rather vindictive, to treasure up old grievances in the decline of life, but his actions were governed by his sense of honor, which forbade him to hold intercourse with men whose conduct would not bear close scrutiny.

In the year 1842, his brother-in-law, Dr. Heap, and family were again his guests, and he took great pleasure in the society of his relatives, and in making excursions with them by land and water, to show them everything of interest. About this time he compiled an excellent guide-book for the use of Americans visiting Constantinople, which saved travelers a great deal of trouble in their excursions in and around the city. He had before this, employed his time in writing familiar letters to his friend James K. Paulding, giving a graphic description of the country, and the manners and customs of the people, which was afterwards published by Mr. Paulding in book form. The book was esteemed a pleasant and readable work, and the proceeds of its sale were devoted by the Commodore to the education of his eldest daughter.

In the latter part of the year 1842, the disease *angina pectoris*, to which we have before alluded, had made such inroads upon the Commodore's constitution, that he became very feeble, and was fully aware that he must prepare for his last journey, which he set about doing as calmly as if he were going on an ordinary tour. He had never been what is called a *religious* man, in the common acceptation of the term, but he was honest and conscientious, had never defrauded or deceived anybody, and had all his life been guided by the highest principles of honor. His eldest daughter having married, had gone to Constantinople to be with him, and he had two sisters and this favorite child to attend him in his last illness, and their attentions were unremitting. He had also with him

several nephews and nieces, and was in fact surrounded by a large family, all of whom did everything in their power to relieve his sufferings.

He was attended by an English physician, Dr. Milligan, one of the sultan's medical attendants, and the same who attended Lord Byron at the time of his death, and also by Dr. Hematiades, a Greek protegé of Madame Sigourney, who had been educated in Paris.

The Commodore's life, during the last two years, had been much embittered by bodily and some mental suffering, and towards the last he endured the most excruciating agony, but he bore it with Christian fortitude. When he could no longer read it himself, he had the sacred book read to him by friends, and other religious reading was selected for him adapted to the state of his mind. Prayers for his relief were continually offered up, and one or more of his missionary friends were always with him night and day. He had been too kind and self sacrificing to these people to allow them to neglect him at such a moment.

Suffering and emaciated as he was, his hold upon life was very strong. It was a hard struggle indeed for him to resign his existence, when he had reached that earthly haven of peace and happiness which he had so longed for, and when surrounded by those he loved, but he resigned himself to his fate and met it calmly as a sailor should.

He was aware that the missionary community considered him a sinner, but he had an abiding faith in the justice and mercy of God, through His Son Jesus, by whose righteousness he hoped for salvation. He threw himself at the Saviour's feet with the conviction that he would meet his Redeemer in heaven, never more to be troubled by the mortifications and disappointments he had experienced on earth.

On the 3d of March, 1843, the Commodore lost consciousness, surrounded by his weeping friends who were about to lose a kind father, brother and relation, and amid their prayers and supplications to Heaven the spirit of the brave man was restored to his maker.

"And he died," Genesis 5, 27. This was the text of the funeral sermon preached by the Reverend William

Goodall, March 13, 1843, on which day the mortal remains of Commodore Porter were interred at the foot of the flag-staff, in his garden at San Stephano. The funeral was attended by the entire diplomatic corps, the ministers of the porte, all the missionaries, the relatives and personal friends, and a large concourse of people of all nationalities, for he was universally esteemed for his generous spirit and benevolence.

The United States government, on learning of the decease of their minister, ordered the brig Truxton to bring the remains to this country, where they could repose in his native earth. This was Commodore Porter's last wish, and he was happy in the belief that the government would pay that mark of respect to one whose whole ambition had been to serve his country.

In the fall of 1843, the Truxton, under command of Captain Upshur, arrived in Constantinople, when Mr. John Porter Brown, the first dragoman, who had succeeded the minister in charge of the American legation as chargé d'affaires, chartered the steamer Bangor, and proceeding to San Stephano, removed the body with all due ceremony to the Sublime Porte. From thence it was transported to the Truxton. On this second occasion, the Turkish authorities all turned out to do honor to the memory of the deceased, as did the diplomatic corps, the missionaries, the different nationalities and the relatives and friends. The body was escorted by the officers, seamen and marines of the Truxton and deposited on board, the vessel firing minute guns during the ceremonies.

No man in the Commodore's position, ever received more honor while living or after his death. He had resided fourteen years at Constantinople, representing the United States government to their entire satisfaction, and during all that time he never had an unpleasant word with the Turkish authorities, and died without a reproach upon his name. If he had faults they were forgotten in the remembrance of the many noble qualities which adorned his character, and his name will ever stand high on the list of modern naval heroes.

The Truxton reached Philadelphia in December, 1844, and the navy department gave directions that the remains

of Commodore Porter should be interred with the honors due to his rank and services. The following order of Commodore George C. Read will explain the arrangement of ceremonies.

NAVAL ORDER.

The Honorable the Secretary of the Navy, having caused the remains of the late Commodore Porter to be brought from Constantinople to this city, and directed me to have them interred with the appropriate honors due to that gallant and distinguished officer; the officers of the navy and marine corps, on the station, are hereby notified of the same, and are expected to attend in full dress uniform, with the usual badge of mourning on the left arm and hilt of the sword.

The funeral procession will move from the navy yard on —— the —— instant, at — o'clock, and proceed up Front street to South, up South to Third, up Third to Spruce, up Spruce to Fourth, up Fourth to Chestnut, up Chestnut to Tenth, and up Tenth to St. Stephen's church.

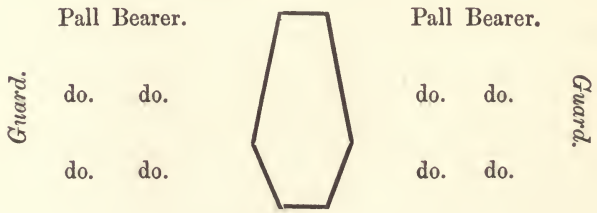
The public authorities, the officers of the army, and of the 1st division Pennsylvania militia, foreign ministers and consuls, the reverend clergy, the personal friends of the deceased, and the citizens generally are invited to attend.

GEORGE C. READ.

Commandant's Office, U. S. Navy Yard,
Philadelphia, January, 1844.

ORDER OF THE PROCESSION.

Military Escort.
Clergy.
Seamen as Carriers.



Seamen as Carriers.
Broad Pendant.
Mourners.

United States Naval Pensioners.
United States Seamen.
Warrant Officers and Assistant Engineers.
Midshipmen.
Masters and Passed Midshipmen.
Medical Officers and Pursers.
Lieutenants of the Army and Marine Corps.
Captains of the Army and Lieutenants of the Navy.
Majors of the Army and Marine Corps and Commanders of the Navy.
Colonels of the Army and Captains of the Navy.
Adjutant General of Pa. and Staff of the Governor.
Officers of the 1st Division Pa. Militia.
Foreign Diplomatic Officers.
Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen of the City of Philadelphia.
Select and Common Councils.
U. S. Marshal and High Sheriff of the City and County of Phila.
Judges of the U. S. and State Courts.
Attorney General of the State and Dist. Attorney of the United States.
Members of the Bar.
Medical Faculty.
Society of Cincinnati.
Society of Sea Captains.
Mayor of the Northern Liberties and Aldermen of the County.
Commissioners of the N. Liberties, Spring Garden, Kensington, Southwark and Moyamensing.
Collector and Officers of the Customs.
Professors and Students of Universities and Colleges.
Seamen of the Merchant Service.
Wardens of the Port of Philadelphia.
Captains of the Merchant Service.
Societies.
Citizens.

After the march through the city, the body was deposited in a vault in St. Stephen's church in 10th street, between Chestnut and Filbert. The late Dr. Ducachet, the rector of St. Stephens, and an old friend of the family, conducted the ceremonies. The remains were subsequently interred at the foot of the flag staff at the Naval Asylum, Philadelphia, and later were buried under a handsome marble monument in the beautiful cemetery of Wood-

lands in West Philadelphia, with the following inscription on the panels:

Commodore David Porter
One of the Most Heroic Sons of
Pennsylvania
Having long represented his Country
with Fidelity
As Minister Resident at
Constantinople
Died at that City
In the Patriotic Discharge of his Duty,
March 3d, 1843.

His Early Youth
Was Conspicuous for Skill and
Gallantry
In the Naval Service of
The United States
When the American Arms
Were Exercised with Romantic
Chivalry
Before the Battlements of
Tripoli.
He was on all occasions
Among the Bravest of the Brave
Zealous in the Performance of
Every Duty
Ardent and Resolute
In the Trying Hour of Calamity
Composed and Steady
In the Blaze of
Victory.

In the War of
1812
His Merits were Exhibited
Not merely as an
Intrepid Commander
But in Exploring New Fields of
Success and Glory
A Career of Brilliant Good Fortune
Was Crowned by an
Engagement
Against Superior Force and
Fearful Advantages
Which History Records
As an Event
Among the Most Remarkable
in
Naval Warfare.

In the large lot surrounding the monument lie buried his wife, two daughters and two of his sons, and the remains of his other children will eventually be interred in the same place. Of the Commodore's ten children but one — the author of this memoir — is now living.

Commodore William D. Porter, U. S. N., his eldest son, died of wounds received in the war of the rebellion.

Lieut. Theodoric Porter, U. S. army, was the first officer killed in battle, during the Mexican war. He volunteered to search for Colonel Cross, was surrounded by the enemy and fell covered with wounds rather than surrender.

Thomas Porter fell a victim to yellow fever while a midshipman in the Mexican navy. Hambleton Porter

died of the same disease while serving as passed midshipman in the United States navy, at the breaking out of the Mexican war.

Henry O. Porter died from the effects of wounds and disabilities, received in the navy. He was first lieutenant of the Hatteras when she was sunk by the Alabama. He went down with the ship and was afterwards picked up and made prisoner by the enemy.

It will appear from this statement that Commodore Porter's sons did their duty to their country, and lost their lives in its service. Man needs no other eulogy than this.

The reader of this biography must judge from its pages the character of Commodore Porter. It would of course be impossible for the writer to give a thoroughly impartial opinion with regard to one with whom he was so closely identified. His conduct in war and in peace and his written communications will be the best guide for those who did not know him personally. From this it will appear that he was a very decided character, outspoken and impulsive, which would be apt at times to involve him in difficulties, but that character was founded upon truth, honesty, courage, and conscientiousness, four qualities which are seldom found combined in one person, but which, when they do exist, will carry a man honorably through the checkered scenes of life.

Commodore Porter possessed an intelligent mind and an ability to adapt himself to any profession he thought proper to follow. Had he started in the career of civil life he would doubtless have attained the highest honors.

In spite of the defects of style which may characterize one who is not a professional author, the writer of these pages derives great satisfaction in giving them to the public, his only object being to preserve the memory of one who had loved his flag and country and devoted a life time to their service.

No brighter flowers or greener chaplets should deck the graves of any than those who fought in the war of 1812, and taught the ancient mistress of the seas that a young Neptune had arisen to snatch the trident from her hand.

The laurel wreath rests but upon a mound of earth, it can give no pleasure to the spirit that once animated the dust beneath the sod, but it will serve to keep alive the flame of patriotism, and, by honoring the courage of the dead, remind the living that they also will be remembered should their character and services entitle them to the applause of their countrymen.

FINIS.

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